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REV. WILLIAM BENDISCH

Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church

SERMONS
ON
MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS,

BY THE
BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
AND THE
SENIOR PREACHERS OF THE OHIO AND NORTH
OHIO CONFERENCES.

“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit,” 1 Cor. xii, 4.

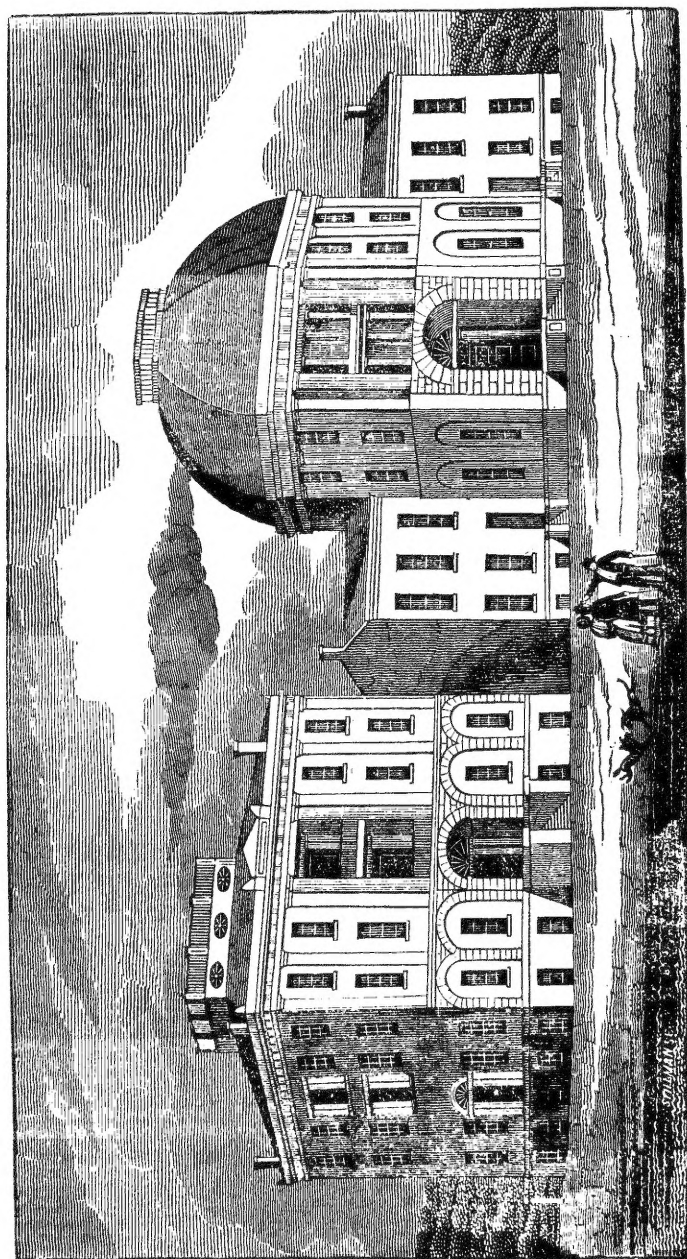
“To pursue learning for its own sake, or as our end, is sowing to the wind, and reaping the whirlwind; but to pursue it for Christ’s sake, and for the advancement of his cause, is one of the noblest employments out of heaven, and cannot be neglected without great personal guilt, and great injustice to the Church,”
REV. ALFRED BARRETT, *Wesleyan Minister*.

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OHIO WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY.

PREFACE.

WHO would write a preface if he could avoid it? 'Tis like cultivating, in an ungenial soil and inhospitable climate, an unsightly plant, which, when mature, yields fruit that no one relishes—scarce any one so much as looks at. But we are told, a book must have a preface—such is the fashion; and, in some things, even *Methodists* must conform to custom, useless though it be. Moreover, the book may fall into the hands of some one who might *wonder* why it was published, and, after spending much time in inquiring into its origin, suffer no little distress from disappointed search. In mercy to such a purchaser, we proceed; and as he would, probably, not be satisfied without ascending to the very grandfather of the project, we state, explicitly, that, on the — day of the year of —, the presiding elder of the Delaware district, North Ohio annual conference, while seated before a cheerful fire, with his thinking cap resting on the organ of causality, was visited with a thought that caused both his eyes to sparkle. On the evening of the same day, meeting with the stationed preacher of Delaware and two of the professors of the University, he gave utterance to his favorite conception in language which caused both the ears of every one of them to start. It must be understood, that there had been some conversation in the University on the subject of erecting a college chapel. Such a building was found indispensable, as the present edifice contained no room sufficiently large to accommodate the pupils, when assembled for devotional exercises. But, being destitute of money, prohibited from building on credit, and without the hope of persuading the public to extraordinary munificence, despair seemed about to settle upon us, when, on the occasion referred to, the presiding elder made the following announcement: “Gentlemen, give me your names, and I will build you a chapel, without subjecting you to a cent’s expense.” Marvelous! What! a *preacher* build a chapel!—an *itinerant*, too!—and not *cost a cent*! If the presiding elder had been inclined to humor, the statement would not have occasioned much surprise; but he is a grave man, unused to joke; nor is he prone to Quixotic enterprises; but one who counts the cost before he lays the

foundation. After keeping his hearers in amazement for a time, he divulged his secret, which, in brief, is as follows: "Publish a volume of original sermons from Ohio Methodist preachers, and build with the proceeds." No sooner said than approved. Thus it will be seen, that the primary object of this work is to raise money—strange object, indeed, in this disinterested world; but we shall lose nothing (we opine) by being frank.

A few days, and a circular was issued to those brethren of the Ohio and North Ohio conferences who had been, for many years, in the traveling connection, requesting them to furnish each a sermon for the proposed volume. In the course of a few months, favorable responses were received from a sufficient number of brethren to insure an adequate supply of discourses. The project was, in due time, submitted to the conferences concerned, and it received their hearty approval. As every good undertaking in this wonderful planet of ours meets with opposition, so did this. Some said, "You will give offense to the younger members of the conferences whom you must pass by. Moreover, you may injure feelings, and excite opposition by the necessary rejection of some discourses which may be written for the volume." Others said, "The book will not sell; the sermons of our illustrious men are rarely called for. If the logic of Wesley, the eloquence of Watson, and the learning of Clarke, cannot attract the attention of our people, can we, preachers of the wilderness, hope to compose a volume that will command a rapid sale?" A third class thought that such a work as was proposed, would, if generally circulated, do more harm than good. "Our itinerant preachers," said they, "at quarterly meetings, would, after returning to their lodgings, gather around the fireside, call for the Sermons, and, reading one written by a presiding elder, or stationed preacher of their acquaintance, subject it to the ordeal of a severe criticism, and retire to rest with no enviable feelings. The spirit of censorious criticism would pass from traveling to local preachers, from local preachers to exhorters, and from exhorters to the people, much to the prejudice of Zion." But there was an objection more formidable than this: some said, "Our theology is too crude. We are not prepared to write for the instruction of those who have a literature as rich as ours."

To these objections it was replied, that, if the selection of writers were made upon the principle of seniority, neglected preachers would have no just cause of umbrage—that brethren writing for the volume would have too much sense to complain if their discourses

were not inserted—that Methodist itinerants are *too pious* to indulge in *ungenerous* criticism, and *too prudent* to lead their people into practices destructive to their peace; and that, in regard to the sale of the volume, we need not be discouraged by the tardiness with which the sermons of celebrated divines are sometimes circulated.

This work presents peculiar charms. 1. That of novelty. The sermons of Wesley, Watson, and Clarke are old; and, like the sun and moon, because they have been so often seen, excite no curiosity, or astonishment. 2. Variety—the spice of *books* as well as of *life*—variety not only of subject, but of style, and of spirit. 3. Appropriateness. This is a high beauty. “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” Every age has its own errors, and its peculiar modes of thought and feeling, and methods of argumentation and expression. Were a man to preach, in the city of Columbus, during the year 1847, such sermons as Luther and Knox preached, his energy and eloquence would be of little consequence—he would fight as one beating the air. The sermons of Tillotson, with all their force and richness, would have comparatively little effect in Ohio cabins; not merely because they are, for the most part, on such controversial subjects as are now scarce heard of, but because they abound in allusions and illustrations unappreciable by our people. Even the *practical* sermons of former ages are less forcible now than those of our own times; for vice has various phases, and the devil different modes of warfare. We must vary *our* tactics, as hell does. Though truth and man remain the same, there is a necessity for *preaching* new discourses. Is there not the same for *printing* them? These sermons are from men who, having been reared among us, and knowing the errors, the heresies, the vices, and the temptations of our times, and being acquainted with our customs, our trains of thought, and our modes of feeling, are able to select suitable themes, and elaborate them in impressive ways. 4. Nor is the present volume wanting in the charm of *ability*. It contains the ripe fruit of some of the best minds in the western pulpit. True, it does not present a “body of divinity,” or a connected series of discourses; but it teaches, as the *Bible* does, *irregularly*. Many of its discourses are rich in doctrinal instruction. Most of them, however, are practical, coming home to the “business and bosoms” of men. Let the proud or the peevish turn to the sermon on “Self-Government;” and if he have a mind to reason, and a heart to feel, he will rise from the perusal a wiser and better man. Does the Christian desire a summary of his duty, his hope, and his

privileges, here he may find it. If he would see a beautiful life, drawn by precept, and illustrated by example, let him read the discourse on Bishop Roberts. If he feel the rising of resentment, let him sit down to "Christian Anger." If he would trace the agency of God's Spirit in the progress of Methodism, here he may be sweetly led. But space does not allow us to speak of all the sermons of this collection, which, containing discourses doctrinal, hortatory, practical, and historical, will, we trust, be found, like holy Scripture, profitable "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." These discourses were not composed in the closet, but in the busy world. And although they contain passages of fine writing, yet, for the most part, they possess that high merit of a Christian sermon—plain truth in plain language.

This work will be valuable as a memento. It is composed by men who, having long been able ministers of the New Testament, have many seals to their ministry. They will soon pass to their reward. Many of them stand upon the very margin of the grave, daily expecting the welcome messenger who is to convey them home. The thousands of our Israel to whom they have proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ, desire to have some memorial of them; and what more suitable one than this? These sermons are destined not only to discourse heavenly messages, but to revive delightful associations in more than a thousand family circles. I fancy I see a stranger take up the volume; and looking over the "Contents," he cries, as his eyes sparkle, "Why, here is a sermon from ———. I remember when he whispered consolation in the ear of my dying father, and brought unexpected relief to my sick mother, and her suffering orphans. Cost what it will, I must have this book for his sake." Another says, "I must keep it in remembrance of my spiritual father and faithful pastor." And a third exclaims, "Here is a sermon from ———. And does he still linger upon the earth? I was afraid he would die without bequeathing to the generation to come a specimen of his sweet and heavenly discourses." Alas! there are productions in the present volume which awaken, in the mind of the writer, *melancholy* as well as *pleasing* associations. Bigelow and Christie have gone up, through much tribulation, to swell the song of the redeemed. The sketch of the one, and the sermon of the other, (it is much to be regretted,) afford but glimpses of their mental excellences; but a *poor* portrait may be a *cherished* remembrancer.

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SERMONS
ON
MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS.

SERMON I.

BY REV. ELIJAH HEDDING, D. D.,
SENIOR BISHOP OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

SELF-GOVERNMENT.

“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city,” Prov. xvi, 32.

WHEN we contemplate the human character, we observe in it surprising contrasts—of greatness and littleness—of wisdom and folly—of strength and weakness. We see these inconsistencies in men of all ranks, and in all conditions of life; we have read of them in the history of all ages and of all countries; in that of the most learned and polished nations of the earth, as well as in that of the savage and barbarian.

At one time, we behold the human being arising in all the strength of intellect, exploring the wonders of creation in heaven above and on earth beneath; ascertaining the laws by which the Almighty governs the universe; and discovering the means by which man can best avail himself of the blessings of Providence.

Again, he comes forward as the friend and benefactor of his race, employing all the powers of his mind and body, in affording relief to afflicted humanity; shedding abroad the most endearing kindness upon the circle of his friends, and even upon his enemies; inventing arts, and contriving plans of extensive usefulness, laboring to promote the happiness of his country, or submitting to

hardships, and encountering dangers to defend its rights and secure its privileges.

At another time, we see man forgetting his highest obligations; losing sight of his best interests; diverting his mind from those subjects which have the strongest claim on his attention; detaching his affections from those objects which are most worthy of his regard; submitting the noble powers of his rational nature to the tyranny of lawless passion, or the despotism of sordid appetite; acting as though he were made only for himself, or as though he were sent into the world only to torment and ruin his fellow-beings. Finally, as if the grand business of his life were to destroy himself, he sinks himself as far beneath the brutes that perish, as the God of nature had placed him above them.

If we had not been favored with light from heaven, we might have perplexed ourselves with perpetual doubts respecting these strange inconsistencies: we could not have determined, with any certainty, respecting our origin, nature, or end; hence we might have received the sentiment of the poet respecting man, and each one have been

“In doubt to deem himself a god or beast.”

But now, as *the darkness is past, and the true light shineth*, we are enabled to attribute each of these effects to its proper cause: “God hath made man upright; but he hath sought out many inventions.” All the noble properties of his nature are to be ascribed to his original creation: “God created man in his own image;” and all the virtues which now appear in him, are to be imputed to the gracious influence of that Good Being who made him. But to account for the littleness, meanness, weakness, and wretchedness, which now so frequently appear in our race, and shock our sensibilities, we are referred both to the original transgression, and to the actual sins of men.

‘The truth is, man, by breaking away from under the

moral government of God, has made himself a prey to the spiritual tyrants who rule him, and drive him to destruction. But a way is opened in the Gospel, in which he may be delivered from those who rule over him, brought back to his God, and prepared by grace to govern himself: and to this he is encouraged in the text.

Self-government is the subject.

And let us inquire:—

I. WHAT IS IMPLIED IN RULING OUR SPIRITS?

II. WHAT ADVANTAGES ARE TO RESULT FROM THUS GOVERNING OURSELVES?

1. *What is implied in ruling our spirits?*

The man who rules his own spirit, has his mind withdrawn from sinful and improper subjects. His meditations, studies, and imaginations, are directed to those things which are proper for a being possessing the powers by which God has distinguished him—are consistent with his own highest interests, and suitable to the relations he holds with all other beings in the universe. His affections are detached from all forbidden objects, and united to all which it is proper for such a being to regard, in a degree suited to their natures, the obligations he is under to them, and the condition in which Providence has placed him. His passions and propensities are in proper subjection to reason, and to the rules of duty made known to him in the revealed will of God. His words and actions are governed by the same principles, and are employed to promote the grand objects for which the Creator sent him into the world, and endowed him with the faculties, which so wonderfully distinguish him from, and place him above, all other kinds of creatures on earth.

Indeed, this implies that religious principles are fully established in the heart, carrying their salutary and benign effects through all its powers, and all the conduct of life. In a word, this involves obedience to all the divine

commands. Thus spake our blessed Lord: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" This is being a Christian, *indeed*, faithful in every relation; and leading to observe that other precept of our Savior: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

But does the character of man, in its present state, exhibit a prevailing inclination to these pious affections, and to these righteous and benevolent practices? No, this inclination is far from him. An inspired apostle considering human beings in their natural state, *unsanctified*, and *unrestrained* by the gracious influence of Heaven, manifested in Christ Jesus our Lord, has solemnly declared, "*There is none righteous, no, not one.*"

How, *then*, are men to govern themselves? They must *know themselves*—he that would rule himself must be acquainted with his own disposition and character. He must see the corruptions of that heart which is *deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked*—that pride, selfishness, stubbornness and excessive love of sensual objects—that *carnal mind which is enmity against God*—all of which are opposed to the commands of reason and religion. He must perceive the criminal nature of past offenses, and be humble before God in sincere repentance for his inward depravity and outward transgressions. He must be apprised of his own weakness: that if he attempt to rule his own spirit by his own power, independently of help from above, his *goodness will be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it will go away*. It was when the Jews had forgotten Jehovah, "*and trusted in falsehood,*" that he said to them, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are

accustomed to do evil." Hence, so many in our day who have purposed to do well have failed in the attempt.

It is necessary that he who would rule himself should realize the truth not only of our Savior's words, "Without me ye can do nothing;" but, also, "that, when we were yet without strength" to rule ourselves, "in due time *Christ died for the ungodly*;" and that he should have full confidence in the object of an apostle's faith, who said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

It is thus we attain a change of moral nature, the establishment of a principle of holiness in the heart, the forgiveness of sin, power from above to rule our own spirits, to conquer our spiritual adversaries, and to honor God in the world. It is allowed, indeed, that restraining grace operates on the minds of those who have never been the subjects of a real change of heart. Under this influence many maintain a government over themselves, so far as to render them moral, benevolent, and, in many respects, *useful*; but it cannot be proved by the Scriptures, that any one is *completely* in possession of this *self-government* till *he is born of the Spirit*. Then *he is in Christ*, and becomes *a new creature—the Son has made him free, and he is free indeed*.

Fallen man will never rightly rule himself till he comes under the government of the Redeemer.

Till then he is *alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in him, because of the blindness of his heart. He is dead in trespasses and sins; wherein he walketh according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*. He is in the snare of the devil, taken captive by him at his will. "The strong man armed keepeth his palace, and his goods are in peace."

But God has been gracious unto man, and said, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a Ransom;" "The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many;" "He tasted death for every man," that every man might have the opportunity of tasting salvation through his blood.

By his death he conquered the enemies of God and man, and by his resurrection and ascension, "he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."

The spirit of prophecy had foretold that the Messiah would be a King, a Prince, a Ruler—that through him the God of heaven should set up a kingdom that should stand for ever. In due time the Gospel of the kingdom proclaimed the good news that Messiah, the Prince, had appeared—that he had made atonement and intercession for the transgressors—that the penitent, believing, guilty soul, might be pardoned.

It first proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven, that is of the Messiah, was at hand; and then, that it was established. It proclaimed liberty to the captives, and invited the slaves of sin and Satan to come and enjoy the liberty and blessings of the kingdom of God. It called them to come into a kingdom, whose citizens possessed righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

The same proclamation is now sounding through the world. And wherever men will submit to the terms of the Gospel, they shall become citizens in Zion; subjects of the kingdom of the Messiah. They shall be delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

The word of prophecy had declared, that in this kingdom its subjects should have the law of God written in their hearts: "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts." The holy principles of God's moral law are written in the

new hearts of his redeemed, believing people. "Created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works," they have hearts to hate all sorts of sin, and to love their God, and to love their duty in all its branches. This new principle, or new nature—this grace of God in their hearts guards them against evil thoughts, tempers, passions, words, and works; and promotes in them all holy affections, and all the works of piety, justice, and mercy. And it is by this principle alone, that man is able rightly to rule his own spirit. This government of one's self is obtained by grace. The grace of God in Christ Jesus is the foundation of it, and without this grace no fallen being will ever govern himself to the acceptance of God who made him. But when this grace is received in the heart by faith, and preserved in a spirit of true obedience, man lives a new life. He can say with St. Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." And now, as this redeemed people are taken into Christ's kingdom, adopted into his family, have partaken of his nature, have become children of the King of Zion, and rule themselves as he rules the Church, they are styled, "a ROYAL priesthood, a holy *nation*, a peculiar people;" and it is said, they are "*made* KINGS and priests unto God," and that "they shall REIGN on the earth."

But, though this government of the redeemed soul is obtained by grace, though grace alone can give strength to maintain it, yet the Christian is still to give diligence to "make his calling and election sure," lest he be "entangled again with the yoke of bondage!" And even now, it is only by a humble sense of his dependence on God, a firm resolution to do his will, a steadfast perseverance in watchfulness and prayer, and a faithful application to all the

branches of his duty, that he can "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free."

II. WHAT ADVANTAGES ARE TO RESULT FROM THUS GOVERNING OURSELVES?

We may answer as an apostle did with reference to another subject, "much every way." This course confers many blessings on every situation in life, and affords numerous advantages to men in all their concerns and relations.

1. *Great are the personal advantages.*

The individual who maintains this government over himself, is in a state of peace in his own soul: "Being justified by faith, he has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." He is favored with a testimony from heaven that God loves him; for "the love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto him." He is delivered from those corroding anxieties and tormenting fears respecting the future events of life, to which many are subject, and by which so many are made miserable; for now he puts his trust in God, and rests in an unshaken assurance that God will protect him, and order the changes of his state, so as shall be best suited to his present and future happiness. He is saved, also, from those sinful gratifications and excesses, by which, *otherwise*, soul and body might be prostrated; and is conducted safely through the journey of life, in that manner which will best contribute to his present improvement and comfort, and train him up for the hallowed joys of that place into which nothing impure can enter.

Although the wise counsels of Heaven, which, to enlighten the world by examples of Christian fortitude and patience, have permitted martyrs and other saints to suffer, may also call him to taste the cup of affliction; yet he will find support and comfort in a consciousness of the presence

and care of his heavenly Father, and in a firm belief "that all things work together for good to them that love God."

He who rules himself is honored of God. They who walk humbly with God, being in subjection to the Father of their spirits, have a near access to him, and are styled, in the Scriptures, "*kings and priests*." Neither is it an inconsiderable advantage, that they are honored with the friendship and care of angels, and blessed with the fellowship of good men. As they are happy themselves, they are also a blessing to others: instead of corrupting their fellow-creatures by their example, they become the honored instruments in the Divine hand, of shedding abroad the blessings of Heaven on mankind; for *they are the light of the world*. These, my brethren, these are the faithful servants, whom God will accept, bless, and support in the day of death. These being delivered from the guilt and dominion of sin, shall not be afraid of the king of terrors; *the Sun of righteousness* will illumine their path to a happier world; holy angels will bear them to the mansions of rest; and there shall they remain for ever happy with the Lord.

2. *Great are the advantages of self-government in the relation between rulers and subjects.*

Under its influence, rulers properly estimate the origin and dignity of their authority. So far from presuming that the right to rule others is the effect of chance, or that it is an *inherent right*, or that it is *merely* the gift of the people independent of a higher power; they consider that they have derived it through the people from God; to whom they must ultimately render their account: "For there is power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of no God." Realizing the principles of *ministers* of God, they feel the force of their high obligations; and far from trusting *solely* to human wisdom, which has led so many of the great and mighty men of the earth in the paths of cruelty

and oppression, in all their deliberations, they consult the will of *Him*, who has intrusted them with this distinguished service, and to this will they reverently conform. "David, the son of Jesse, said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the *fear of God*," 2 Sam. xxiii, 1-3. Such personages, (especially in a country like this,) not esteeming themselves the masters, but the *fathers* of the people, and *the ministers of God to them for good*, perceive that the great object for which they are elevated above their brethren, is, to employ their superior talents, and order their commanding example in such a manner, as shall best secure the happiness of those over whom they bear rule. *Such rulers* will faithfully perform the great duties of their stations—duties connected with the obligations into which they entered under the "*oath of God*," in a manner agreeable to the nature and design of their offices. Such are, indeed, a blessing to their country; "not a terror to good works, but to the evil;" for, *when the righteous are in authority the people rejoice*.

When the people are under the influence of the same principle, they obey their rulers, whether acting as *legislators*, holding *executive* offices, or sitting in the place of judgment. A conviction that they rule their own spirits, will inspire a confidence, that they will enact equal laws, enforce their due execution, and dispense righteous judgment; hence the people feel safe and happy in committing their dearest earthly interests to the direction of such rulers. Not disposed to unreasonable jealousies, or to magnify errors connected with public measures, which, through the imperfection of human judgment, will sometimes occur, or to imagine errors where they do not exist, the people have that prohibition of *Heaven* written on their hearts. "Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." And

although men who have no rule over their own spirits, are unwilling to be ruled by others, saying with the aspiring Absalom, "O that I were made judge in the land, that every man who hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!"—though such demagogues foment party contentions, raise clamors against their rulers, disturb the peace of society, and, in some measure, prevent the good effects of salutary laws, the people we have described are willing to be "subject to the higher powers," and yield a cheerful obedience. They regard their rulers, not merely as their brethren in the ordinary walks of life, but as the *representatives* of God; and as the instruments of accomplishing his benevolent designs toward man, as a social being. They *render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.* We may further remark, that however self-interest, popular opinion, or fear of punishment may operate on some men, *while under the public eye*, inducing them to appear as the obedient subjects of salutary laws; yet experience has evinced that in general nothing but the influence of *pure* religion can *secure* this object. It operates on the heart, nips evil in the very bud, follows man into the secrecy of retirement, where human law is divested of its authority, and where no human judge can enter. There it inspects every motive, takes cognizance of every action, raises a tribunal in every breast, and pronounces sentence upon secret faults, as well as upon open offenses. Whatever despotism may accomplish on an uncultivated, ignorant multitude, in securing obedience to law, yet, amongst an enlightened and free people, under a free and popular government, like this under which Heaven has placed us, we can expect obedience to our salutary laws, only in a degree proportionate to the prevalence of the *heaven-born principle of self-government.*

And here, as the principles of law, and the wise designs of government, are carried into effectual operation, *principally*, by righteous decisions in the judicial department; and, as the security of property, reputation, liberty, and even life itself, depends, in so great a degree, on the testimonies given in courts of justice, we cannot too forcibly advert to the vast importance, absolute necessity, and powerful influence of this principle, in all who are admitted as witnesses before the ministers of justice. How can good government be maintained without courts of judicature to enforce the sanctions of law? How can these sanctions be justly distributed, in most cases, without evidence? What confidence can be placed in that evidence, if the witness who gives it has not the fear of God before his eyes? But he who is under the influence of this principle, when he appeals to *Him* who searches the heart, for the truth of what he declares, calls on the omniscient God to take notice of what he says, and invokes his curse, and renounces his favor, if what is said, under the solemnity of an oath, be false—he, I say, is saved from that awful sin of **PERJURY**—a sin which, in the absence of this principle, has brought so much misery on the life of man, and sent so many souls to eternal perdition. Feeling his solemn bond, he speaks the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and is made an important instrument in establishing justice in the land; in clearing and vindicating the innocent, and restraining or condemning the guilty. On this point, I would take the liberty to bring to your recollection the sentiments of that great and good man, in whom we exult as the *Father of his Country*, and for whose memory every American cherishes the most lively sentiments of gratitude and veneration. “Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who would labor to subvert these great pillars

of human happiness ; these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation *desert* the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice ? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education, on minds of a peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail, in exclusion of religious principle." (Washington's Address to the People of America.)

There is another benefit to the political interests of a country, arising from the principle of which we have been speaking, which highly deserves our notice. It is the answer of the prayers of a pious people, offered to the Supreme Disposer of events in behalf of their rulers and their country. However unbelief may operate on the minds of some men, in rendering them insensible to the blessings they receive in answer to prayer ; yet, that *fervent* prayer is an instrument of procuring *national*, as well as individual blessings, is a truth supported by rational views of a superintending Providence, and plainly declared throughout the Bible. Would Sodom have been spared had there been ten righteous, *praying* people in that city ? Then we may believe that a holy people have a peculiar interest in the care of Heaven, and that their prayers are regarded in those dispensations of Providence by which their country is defended from storms of calamity, and by which blessings from above, in rich abundance, are poured upon it. So deeply are they impressed with a sense of the importance and utility of civil government, the responsibility of its officers, the burdens they are called to bear, and the arduous

labors they have to perform ; and so solicitous are they that those officers may be enabled faithfully and usefully to discharge the duties of their high functions, that they find a pleasure in complying with that exhortation of the apostle, " Pray for all that are in authority ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty."

To a community consisting of rulers and people, falling under the description now given, the words of Moses to the chosen tribes are justly applicable : " Happy art thou, O Israel ; who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord ! The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms : and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee."

3. *Great are the advantages arising from self-government in our religious relations.*

To view the subject particularly as it applies to ministers and hearers. The work of the ministry must be acknowledged by all who believe the truths of revelation, and hope for happiness beyond the grave, to be the most important in which fallible man can possibly engage. It extends, in its effects and consequences, beyond the limits of time, and involves the future happiness or misery of millions, by leading them to felicities or woes which baffle description.

The political decisions of senates may afflict nations with calamity, or deliver them from it ; but the good and evil which they administer must terminate with the present life. It is not so with the ministry of the Gospel. The effects which result from the faithful or unfaithful labors of those who stand forth as ministers of Christ, to persuade sinners to be reconciled to God, may, indeed, be perceived in every stage of human probation ; but they will become more conspicuous as life draws toward its close ; they will remain unextinguished at death, and assume in eternity a visible and permanent character.

The man who engages in this solemn work, is accountable

to God, not merely for his own soul, but becomes responsible also for the souls of those who have been committed to his care. The sacred writings have guarded his office with the most awful sanctions. Both promises and denunciations conspire to keep alive his hopes and fears, by holding out, in the most pointed language, the rewards or punishments which await him in a future world. On the one hand, we are assured that "they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever;" while, on the other, we are clearly informed, that unfaithful watchmen shall have the blood of the people required at their hands.

It is only when those servants of the Most High, whom he has commissioned to publish his purposes of mercy to the children of men, are truly under the influence of pure, Scriptural religion, that they will accomplish the work for which they have received their high commission. Then, their tempers and lives, both in public and private, are so far under the government of the wisdom from above, that their office is recommended to all who see or hear them. They live the religion they preach to others, and speak feelingly and persuasively of a religion which has full possession of their own souls. As their hearts are replenished with the very power of godliness, their ordinary conversation partakes of its salutary influence, and is *good for the use of edifying, and ministers grace to the hearers*. However some who are called preachers, having no rule over their own spirits, may indulge themselves in pride, vanity, and ambition, to the grief of the people of God; with these men it is far otherwise; for they have *learned* of Him who was *meek and lowly*; they have imbibed his spirit; hence others "take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus."

In view of this character, a prophet exclaimed, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that

bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth." Happy are the people favored with such a ministry. The ignorant are instructed, the wanderer is reclaimed, the vicious are reformed, and the hypocrite is convicted. The heart of the sinner is humbled, his sins are pardoned, and his soul is renewed. The weak are strengthened, the afflicted are comforted, the doubting and timid are enlightened, confirmed and emboldened to confess their Lord, and the weary pilgrim is animated, encouraged, and helped forward in the way to Zion. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

Hearers of the Gospel, when of the same character, are ready to say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Though it must be acknowledged, that the influence of the public servants of Christ has been greatly diminished, and the success of the Gospel much hindered by the misrepresentations of some of their hearers, who are impatient under admonitions and reproofs, and become enemies of the cross; yet there are hearers who rule their own spirits, and, yielding to the benign spirit of the Gospel, profit by its reproofs, and welcome the admonitions of a faithful minister. However painful it is to reflect on the hinderances cast in the way of the Gospel by false professors of religion, at the same time, it is a subject of great consolation that there are so many, whose sincere piety and righteous example, as they are associated with the Gospel, are made powerful instruments of confirming the truth, and spreading the light of it through the world.

The spirit of the Gospel is a spirit of charity. And, as far as it governs the hearts of the teachers and hearers of Christianity, it will exclude that spirit of bigotry, which has been the source of presumptuous judging, harsh censures, and bitter railings of one sect against another.

It will inspire such a brotherly affection, in all the branches of the true Church, that, "by this shall all men know that they are the disciples of Christ, because they have love one to another." And the more the ministers and professors of the religion of Christ are under the government of which we have spoken, the more powerfully and extensively the blessings of the Gospel will prevail among mankind, till the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God, and all nations shall call the Savior blessed.

4. *Great are the advantages arising from self-government in our social relations.*

Of all the associations formed in this life, that of the conjugal state is the most endearing, and the most important. But the happiness of this relation depends so much on the principle of *self-government*, that without a proper management, reciprocally, in the parties, of temper and conduct, the happiness contemplated will not be realized; but the connection itself will become an occasion of the most direful ills of life. Still when those who have formed this important relation, and taken upon themselves these solemn obligations, have learned to rule their own spirits, "to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless," they will realize the blessings of a happy union of kindred minds, and will aid each other in ruling their own spirits, and in preparing for higher enjoyments.

Parents ruling their own spirits, will learn to "rule well their own house, having their children in subjection with all gravity." They will be solicitous not only for the temporal welfare of their children, but, also, for their spiritual and eternal happiness.

Likewise, the rising members of a family thus educated, having learned to rule their own spirits, will study the things of peace and love—will live together as brethren—will reciprocate acts of mutual justice and kindness, and will form such characters in the estimation of men, that the

heads of such a family "shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate." .

The good effects resulting from *self-government* throughout society in general, are too well known to need a minute illustration. A few observations shall suffice. Among men in the various connections of civilized life, this exhibition of the restraints and influence of correct principles not only directly promotes social happiness, but, through the influence of good examples, the bold transgressor and even the infidel are in some measure restrained; so that these are far less wicked than they would be, if these examples were not before them. Dreadful indeed would be the state of our world, were there no examples of self-restraint and no influence of correct principles! *Self-government*, in every relation, and under every circumstance, will counteract the passions and appetites most subversive of human happiness. It breaks the ruthless fangs of fraud, and secures from the deadly gripe of its iron jaws, the rights of innocence and unsuspecting honesty. It wrests from the rapacious appetite of luxury the superabundant gifts of Providence, and converts them into instruments of mercy to those destitute of daily bread, and into means of promoting religious, moral, and humane institutions. It *tames* that *unruly* member, and chains in eternal silence the tongue of slander, which otherwise would be set on fire of hell, and would "set on fire the whole course of nature." It employs that noble gift for the great social purposes for which it was originally bestowed. It dries up the poisoned streams of intemperance, and leads those thirsty souls who would pine and die under its malignant effects, to those salubrious waters "which make glad the city of God." It subdues those libidinous propensities, which, in so many instances, where this principle does not operate, drives multitudes of the children of Adam from the society of civilized man, to roam like

herds through the dark and filthy places of the earth; not considering *that the dead are there*, and that the *guests* who have gone before them *are in the depths of hell*. It fixes a sovereign check on pride, ambition, envy, jealousy, and resentment, which, unrestrained, would burst forth like so many flames from the regions beneath, and spread desolation and death through the earth.

When princes, and senates, and the great among the nations shall generally yield to the rightful authority of this principle, it will put a stop to the career of WAR, that demon of darkness which has triumphed over the earth since the days of Nimrod, involving cities in flames, and countries in ruins, depopulating the earth, and drenching it with the blood of the slain of all nations. Yes, brethren, *self-government* shall hush into perpetual silence “the thunder of the captains,” the shouts of the conquerors, the wild, distracted cry of the vanquished, and the groans of the wounded and the dying in the field of carnage. *Then*, then, blessed be God, the nations “shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” Then all the tribes of men shall raise a shout toward heaven, melodious as when angels sing, “**ALLELUIAH; FOR THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH.**”

IMPROVEMENT.

1. *Let us reflect on the absolute necessity of ruling our spirits.* Without this there can be no virtue, no true religion, no good government in the world, and no hope beyond the grave.

As the beauty of an agreeable object is more clearly perceived by contrasting it with its opposite; as the advantages of a wisely organized, and well administered civil government, are more readily appreciated by considering them in contrast with the disadvantages of a state of anarchy;

so, the necessity of *self-government*, and the blessings attending it, will be more powerfully impressed on our minds by observing the evils arising from the want of it. And who can look into the history of man, or survey the present state of the world, without being grieved, and pained to the heart, by a view of the miseries arising from the absence of self-restraint?—miseries, not only among the poor, the weak, the vulgar, and the ignorant, but among the opulent, the mighty, the polished, and the learned of our race.

For mournful examples of these miseries, we need not go back to the sages, heroes, and statesmen of heathen antiquity, who enlightened the world with their science, made it tremble with their prowess, or chained the nations in obedience to their laws; many of whom ruined themselves or their countries by their private or public excesses. Nor need we direct your attention to those renowned personages of the Hebrew nation, who, in the early part of their lives, were men of God, inculcating the principles of wisdom, and leading their people in the paths of virtue and piety, but who, afterward failing in vigilance, lost sight of their own principles, and fell into evils, which have transmitted their names, in disgrace, to succeeding generations. Their crimes are recorded in the Scriptures as monuments of human instability, as warnings to all who come after them of the dangerous tendency of an ungoverned spirit, and as irresistible arguments of the fidelity of those who wrote the sacred records. Neither is it necessary that I should turn your attention to the present nations of Europe. It may sufficiently humble us to notice the effects of moral disease in our own country. We are happy, indeed, in believing that our forms of government, and the degree of information and virtue among our citizens, will, generally, guard against elevating to places of honor and trust, men of ungoverned passions, seeking their own aggrandizement

and not the public good; or if at any time deceived by the *Absaloms of the day*, the exercise of elective rights will speedily reduce such to a private station. But after acknowledging all the advantages we enjoy, and all the virtue there is among us, there is yet cause of bitter lamentation. Alas! fatal instances often occur even within our favored country, when the hearts of families are wrung with anguish, and our towns are crowded with a population enervated by intemperance. Alas! language would fail should I attempt to speak of the thousands of evils resulting from that curse of our country, the excessive use of ardent spirits. Look yonder: see that hapless mother and those forlorn children, whom nature intended for better days; and whose prospects, perhaps, were once as flattering as those of your families: see them in yonder hovel, shivering with the cold of winter and half consumed by hunger! Where is the husband? Where is the father? Ah! he is spending his time, and wasting his earnings, with a rabble of idlers and spendthrifts in the temple of Bacchus! Hark! what means that deep, long moan you just heard from a broken-hearted parent? Alas! his youthful son, who had twined around his heart—once the joy and hope of his life—has degenerated from the principles of his education, and wandered by degrees, till at length he has fallen a victim to intemperance, or to vicious company, and committed desperate deeds, which have involved him in ruin, and the family in disgrace and sorrow.

To what can we attribute the crime of the duelist, but to a want of rule over his own spirit? Why have statesmen, and counselors, and heroes, fallen among the dead in those sanguinary conflicts? And why were their antagonists stained with the blood of their brethren, and their country called to weep over the premature loss of those highly distinguished among her sons? Ah! Solomon has given us the answer: “He that hath no rule over his own

spirit, is like a city that is broken down, and without walls."

Here we ought to notice another alarming evil, I mean the frequent occurrence of fraud and flagrant impositions upon the honest and industrious—an evil which is destroying all confidence, loosening the foundation of private rights and property, and shaking the security of social intercourse.

2. *This subject should impress on our minds the obligations we are under, not only to govern ourselves by the rules of religion and virtue; but, also, to employ the abilities God has given, and the means he has put into our hands, to influence our fellow-men in this only safe and truly honorable course.*

Notwithstanding the views we have been called to take of sin and misery in our country, we have reason to be thankful that piety and morality are far from being extinct. We would be grateful to the God of our fathers, that our principles of civil government are so favorable to the promotion of Christian principles and duties. Neither would we be forgetful that the example of a large portion of our rulers is of such a character as to excite respectful attention to these great subjects. Nor would we withhold from the friends of God and man, those congratulations which are merited by the extraordinary exertions recently made in this country to promote the diffusion of truth, and all the leading objects of Christian benevolence.

But much yet remains to be done, and much must be done, or poverty and ruin will overspread our country.

This wicked world must be reformed and converted to God, or millions of human souls will go down to eternal perdition. The friends of God and man must arise in the strength of their great Redeemer, and exert themselves in this glorious enterprise.

The grand instrument by which this gracious work is to be accomplished, is the word of God. That instrument is

in your hands, and the principles of it must be diffused through the community, and extended all over the world. Parents must teach their children, masters their servants, school-teachers their pupils, and Christians their friends and neighbors, the fear of the Lord. The numerous benevolent and Christian societies, which have for their object the conversion of mankind, must go on in their labors of love, and increase in their benign operations, till the world is evangelized.

The Gospel of the kingdom must be preached through all nations, and the Gentiles must be enlightened, and brought to bow to the Prince of Peace. Let its messengers rise higher and higher into the spirit of their heavenly mission; let them spread abroad through the tribes of the earth, bearing the glad tidings of salvation, till the "people who sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death shall see a great light," and place themselves under the government of the Son of God. All who love our Lord Jesus Christ must "pray for the peace of Jerusalem," and cease not, "until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

The promise is gone forth, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." "The heathen," the infidel, and the skeptic "may rage, and the people imagine a vain thing," but the work of the Messiah will go on, and his conquests and kingdom shall be extended, till the King of Zion shall reign over all nations. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

This earth was never made for sin and Satan; they are

intruders and rebels on it—they have no right in it, and Messiah, the Prince, will yet drive them from it. Neither are the men who serve sin and Satan to remain here in rebellion for ever: if they will not submit to the Prince Emanuel, “they shall be broken with a rod of iron—they shall be dashed in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” They “shall be driven away in their wickedness,” and chained down in the bottomless pit with “the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan,” *who deceived them*; but the earth shall be the Lord’s, and he shall be the Governor, and shall have millions of holy and happy people to serve and honor him in it. “He shall have dominion, also, from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.”

What a happy world shall this then be, when the accuser of the brethren shall be cast down—when sin that brought death into our world shall be driven far from it! The righteous shall then no longer be vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. The abominations which now scourge the world, shall no longer be seen or heard, nor their dreadful consequences torment the inhabitants of the earth. “The wolf, also, shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’s den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

SERMON II.

BY REV. BEVERLY WAUGH, D. D.,

ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

A FUNERAL DISCOURSE

ON THE DEATH OF REV. ROBERT R. ROBERTS, SENIOR BISHOP OF THE
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH; DELIVERED IN LIGHT
STREET CHURCH, BALTIMORE CITY, ON
THURSDAY, MAY 18, 1843.

“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,”
Rev. ii, 10.

BRETHREN OF THE MINISTRY AND FELLOW-CHRISTIANS:—In the midst of general joy and rejoicing throughout our wide-spread connection, on account of the unparalleled success with which it has pleased God to crown the united labors of our preachers and people during the past twelve months, we have been suddenly called to sorrow and mourning. A chief minister, late at the head of the hundred of thousands of our Israel, has been removed from our sight and service. The venerable Roberts, senior bishop of the Methodist Church is no longer on earth. On Sunday, the 26th day of March last, he bade adieu to terrestrial scenes, and immediately hailed those of celestial glory and blessedness, with which he will henceforth become more and more conversant for ever and ever. The demise of such a man as Bishop Roberts, might well be the occasion of a momentary pause in our shouts of halleluiahs; but let no unbelieving sadness mar the sacredness of the hour in which we perform appropriate services in connection with our recent bereavement. Our sorrow is not that of those “who have no hope.” For him to have lived would have been “Christ,” but “to die” has, indeed, been gain to him; he having departed to be with Christ, which is far better than his continuance in the body. We have good and valid reasons for believing that Robert R. Roberts was “faithful

unto death," and that his divine Master has already placed on his triumphant brow the "crown of life." Our lamentations, therefore, Christian brethren, should be mitigated by commingling with them sentiments of pious resignation, and feelings of chastened praise, like those which were so impressively and sweetly expressed by an ancient servant of God under sore bereavements, and at a time of great domestic affliction: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Dear to us as was our beloved Superintendent, who was venerable alike for character, office, and age, we ought rather to rejoice and give thanks that he was so long spared to go in and out before us, than to grieve that he has

"His body with his charge laid down,
And ceased at once to work and live."

The sacred text which has been quoted on this funeral occasion, is rich in theology and instinct with promise and hope. The whole science of Christianity, in theory, in experience, and in practice, is included in the first clause of that part of the verse which has been read in your audience, "Be thou faithful unto death," and its blessed results in eternity, are rendered indubitably sure by the promise of its immutable Author, as set forth in the emphatic words of the second part of our text, "I will give thee a crown of life." The original application of the words now under consideration, was to the angel or pastor of the Church of Christ at Smyrna, and, through him, to "the flock over the which the Holy Ghost had made him an overseer." Some commentators have said, that the chief minister, to whom this portion of the Apocalypse was addressed, was the celebrated Polycarp, who, at a very advanced age, suffered martyrdom, during the fourth general persecution under an edict of Pagan Rome. Of this venerable man of God and minister of Jesus Christ, it has been recorded, that, when brought before his judge,

and commanded to blaspheme and abjure Christ, he firmly answered, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he never did me wrong, how then can I blaspheme my King who hath saved me?" He was then adjudged to the flames, and suffered cheerfully for Christ his Lord and Master. It ought, however, not to be concealed that there are other expositors and chronologists, who place the martyrdom of Polycarp fifty years later than the period embraced in our text. In connection with the present use of this portion of the holy Scriptures, it is not at all important to know whether it was Polycarp or a minister of earlier date, to whom these words first came. They are as full of "grace and truth" at this day as they were in the first century, and as applicable to the faithful ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ at the present time as in any age preceding. Believing "that whatsoever was written aforetime, was written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope," I have not hesitated to select this passage of the New Testament as being well calculated to conduct us to profitable reflections, and not inappropriate to the solemn occasion on which we are convened.

Two views are presented by our text, to which your attention is affectionately solicited. They are,

- I. THE INCULCATION OF A MOST IMPORTANT DUTY; AND,
- II. THE INDUCEMENT TO ITS PERFORMANCE.

I purpose to make only a few brief remarks on the subject thus announced, and then proceed to give a short biographical sketch of the venerable man whose memory we cherish, and whose virtues we embalm in our hearts; thus remembering him who had the rule over us, and who spoke to us the word of God, following his faith, considering the end of his conversation "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

- I. The important duty here inculcated is fidelity; fidelity

maintained throughout the whole period of our probation: "Be thou faithful unto death." There is in this Divine precept great conciseness, indeed; but it is very comprehensive and emphatic, embracing the principles and practice of fidelity in the various relations which we sustain to God and man. By analyzing the duty here enjoined, we shall find it to consist of principles and practices so naturally and inseparably united, that without the combined action of both, the duty cannot be performed. The principles of Christian fidelity are deeply seated in the moral constitution, controlling and commanding the issues of the heart. The conduct thence resulting, is their practical exhibition in actual life. But what are the principal items which enter into the composition of the duty here inculcated? They are,

1. *The principles and practice of fidelity to God.* Here we lay the foundation of all moral excellence in man, believing that

"A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man."

The essential, vigorous principles of fidelity to God, are FAITH and LOVE. True piety may be compounded of other principles likewise, which, however, on this occasion need not be specified, especially when it is considered that they are subordinate to the two vital principles named, and may be regarded as the result of their previous existence and operation. Faith, as a principle of Christian experience and practice, is, by the apostle Paul, defined to be, "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." On this quotation from the Epistle to the Hebrews, Dr. Adam Clarke has the following critical and judicious note: "Faith is the SUBSISTENCE of things hoped for; the DEMONSTRATION of things not seen." The Greek word which we translate *substance*, signifies *sub-sistence*—that which becomes a *foundation* for another thing to stand on. And the word which our translators

have rendered *evidence*, signifies such a conviction as is produced in the mind by *the demonstration of a problem*, after which demonstration no doubt can remain, because we see from it that the thing *is*; that it cannot but be; that it cannot be otherwise than it is, and is proved to be. Such is the faith by which the soul is justified; or, rather, such are the effects of justifying faith. On it subsists the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, where it lives by the Holy Ghost. At the same time, the Spirit of God witnesses with their spirits who have this faith, that their sins are blotted out; and this is as fully manifest to their judgment and conscience as the axioms, “A whole is greater than any of its parts;” “Equal lines and angles being placed on one another, do not exceed each other.” Of faith, as it is instrumental in our justification and sanctification, I will quote the words of one of the ablest theologians of the present century. I mean the intellectual and devout Watson. He remarks: “Faith, in Scripture, is presented to us under two leading views: the first is that of *assent*, or *persuasion*; the second, that of *confidence*, or *reliance*. The former may be separate from the latter, but the latter cannot exist without the former. Faith, in the sense of an intellectual assent to truth, is, by St. James, allowed to devils. A dead, inoperative faith, is, also, supposed, or declared, to be possessed by wicked men, professing Christianity; for our Lord represents persons coming to him at the last day, saying, ‘Lord have we not prophesied in thy name?’ &c.; to whom he will say, ‘Depart from me; I never knew you.’ 2. The faith which is required of us as a condition of salvation, always includes confidence, or reliance, as well as assent, or persuasion. That faith by which the ‘elders obtained a good report’ was of this character: it united assent to the truth of God’s revelations with a noble confidence in his promise: “Our fathers trusted

in thee, and were not confounded.' All the instances of faith in the persons miraculously healed by Christ, were, also, of this kind: their faith was belief in his claims, and, also, confidence in his goodness and power.

3. That faith in Christ which, in the New Testament, is connected with salvation, is clearly of this nature; that is, it combines assent with reliance, belief with trust: 'Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name,' that is, in dependence upon my interest and merits, 'he shall give it you.' Christ was preached both to the Jews and Gentiles as the object of their trust, because he was preached as the only sacrifice for sin; and they were required to renounce their dependence upon their own accustomed sacrifices, and to transfer that dependence to his death and mediation: and 'in his name shall the Gentiles trust.' He is said to be set forth as a propitiation, 'through faith in his blood;' which faith can neither merely mean assent to the historical fact that his blood was shed by a violent death, nor a mere assent to the general doctrine that his blood had an atoning quality; but as all expiatory sacrifices were *trusted in* as the means of propitiation, both among Jews and Gentiles, faith, or trust, was now to be exclusively rendered to the blood of Christ, as to the divinely appointed sacrifice for sin, and the only refuge for the true penitent.

4. To the most unlettered Christian this, then, will be very obvious, that true and saving faith in Christ consists both of assent and trust; but this is not a blind and superstitious trust in the sacrifice of Christ, like that of the heathens in their sacrifices, nor the presumptuous trust of wicked and impenitent men, who depend on Christ to save them in their sins; but such a trust as is exercised according to the authority and direction of the word of God; so that *to know* the Gospel in its leading principles, and to have a cordial belief in it, is necessary to that more specific act of faith which is called *reliance*, or, in systematic language,

fiducial assent. The Gospel, as the scheme of man's salvation, declares that he is under law; that this law of God has been violated by all; and that every man is under sentence of death. Serious consideration of our ways, confession of the fact, and sorrowful conviction of the evil and danger of sin, will, under the influence of divine grace, follow the cordial belief of the testimony of God, and we shall then turn to God with contrite hearts and earnest prayers and supplications for his mercy. This is called 'repentance toward God;' and repentance being the first subject of evangelical preaching, and then the injunction to believe the Gospel, it is plain that Christ is only *immediately* held out, in this divine plan of our redemption, as the object of trust, in order to forgiveness, to persons in this state of penitence and under this sense of danger. The degree of sorrow for sin, and alarm upon this discovery of our danger as sinners, is nowhere fixed to a precise standard in Scripture; only it is supposed everywhere, that it is such as to lead men to inquire earnestly, "What must I do to be saved?" and with earnest seriousness to use all the appointed means of grace, as those who feel that their salvation is at issue; that they are in a lost condition, and must be pardoned or perish. To all such persons, Christ, as the only atonement for sin, is exhibited as the object of their trust, with the promise of God, that 'whosoever believeth in him shall not perish; but have everlasting life.' Nothing is required of such but this actual trust in, and personal apprehension, or taking hold of, the merits of Christ's death as a sacrifice for sin; and upon their thus believing they are justified; their 'faith is counted to them for righteousness,' or, in other words, they are forgiven." After giving what appeared to him this plain Scriptural representation of the doctrine of faith, Mr. Watson adds: "We may infer from it, (1,) that the faith by which we are justified is not a

mere assent to the doctrines of the Gospel, which leaves the heart unmoved and unaffected by a sense of the evil and danger of sin, and the desire of salvation, although it supposes this assent; nor (2) is it that more lively and cordial assent to, and belief in, the doctrine of the Gospel, touching our sinful and lost condition, which is wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God, and from which springeth repentance, although this must precede it; nor (3) is it only the consent of the mind to the method by which God justifies the ungodly by faith in the sacrifice of his Son, although this is an element of it; but it is a hearty concurrence of the will and affections with this plan of salvation, which implies the renunciation of every other refuge, and an actual trust in the Saviour, and personal apprehension of his merits; such a belief of the Gospel by the power of the Spirit of God as leads us to come to Christ, to receive Christ, to trust in Christ, and to commit the keeping of our souls into his hands, in humble confidence of his ability and willingness to save us." This principle of faith apprehending the merit of the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and trusting exclusively and constantly therein for acceptance with God, is in intimate and close connection with LOVE, that other great principle of Christian fidelity which has been named, of which I shall presently speak more at large. The vital connection of these graces is clearly set forth by the apostle, where he says, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but faith, which worketh by love." It is by faith that the Christian lives and holds communion with God, and by faith he walks in the path of obedience, as "seeing him who is invisible." Faith is demonstrated by works of its own production, without which it would be dead, "being alone." When, in penitential sorrow, the awakened sinner anxiously inquires, what he "must do to be saved?" faith conducts to "the Lamb of God, who

taketh away the sin of the world," "in whom he finds redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; and being justified by faith, he has peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom, also, he has access by faith into the grace wherein he stands and rejoices in hope of the glory of God." It is then, also, that "the love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto him;" and the Holy Spirit himself beareth witness with his spirit that he is a child of God. Consequent upon this great real, and relative change in the case of the truly converted man, he realizes in his heart the principle of love, which may not be improperly denominated the essence of the Christian religion.

A few observations only will suffice to justify this remark. When on earth, our divine Master was, by one of his hearers, thus interrogated, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" His reply was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Again: our Saviour in furnishing a criterion by which his followers were everywhere and always to be ascertained, said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Thus are we impressed with the necessity and importance of love as a principle of Christian fidelity. Love, when God is its object, must be the supremacy of the heart's affection, purified, and sanctified, and wholly centred in God. When man is the object loved, the sentiment should be that of kindest sympathy and benevolent regard. When Christians are the objects of love, the feeling should be that of complacency and

delight, drawing each to the other in the fellowship of the Gospel, and uniting all in the bonds of Christ.

2. The principles of living faith and active love, dwelling in the hearts of Christians, will produce, in their practical deportment, fidelity to God and faithfulness to man. God will be served with fidelity according to the rule of that service which he has given in his holy word. There will be a practical exhibition of piety distinctly marking and pointing out the faithful servant of God, as was seen in the histories of Enoch, Job, Abraham, Daniel, and others of Old Testament record, and Peter, John, Paul, and their coadjutors in the cause of early Christianity; in whom neither time, nor place, nor circumstance, produced any abatement from the steady, practical faithfulness to God—to his Church—and to the world.

3. The duty here inculcated includes faithfulness to our fellow-beings in the several relations we bear to them. As members of the great family of mankind dispersed abroad throughout the earth, we are to cherish the sentiment of philanthropy, and always be ready to improve the moral and intellectual condition of the world, as far as practicable; especially should we exert ourselves to give the word of God and a Gospel ministry to the millions of our race who are shut up in Pagan darkness and Mohammedan delusion. In the department of civil government, Christians ought to be faithful; observing, obeying, maintaining, and preserving the constitution and laws under which they live—sacrificing partisan feelings for the general good. As related to the Church, Christians must be faithful in their efforts to maintain the purity of its doctrines, the soundness of its experience, and the wholesomeness of its discipline. The great object to be secured is the prosperity of the cause of Christ, until the nations of the earth from east to west—from north to south, shall own Messiah as their Re-

deemer—Saviour—Lord. In the domestic circle, let the integrity of Christian principles, and the strictness of Christian fidelity, be maintained on the part of husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, masters and servants ; all uniting in efforts to please, improve, and promote the welfare of each other, so as to render life available for good to its utmost capability. O how much more of goodness and happiness there might be in our poor world, if there was more faithfulness to God and man in the earth !

4. As a concluding remark on the duty enjoined in our text, let it be remembered that our fidelity must be perpetuated through life. We must never be “weary in well-doing :” until death we must prosecute the great work of Christian faithfulness, unmoved by any scenes of trial or of difficulty through which we may be called to pass. Whatever opposition may be made by devils or men, we must, by grace, overcome all, and “be steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.”

Having submitted to your consideration various remarks on the duty of being “faithful unto death,” I come now, in the second place, to notice the inducement to perform it.

II. *Reward is the great inducement presented by our adorable Lord and Master : “I will give thee a crown of life.”* Let it not be said that this is a mercenary consideration which should not have influence on Christians, who ought to be supposed to love and pursue goodness for its own sake. The doctrine of disinterested benevolence is of great beauty in theory. It is true to an infinite extent in its application to the Deity ; but in regard to created intelligences, I see not how it can apply to them, except with great restriction and qualification. Nothing is clearer than that it does not belong to man, who, being constitutionally a creature of hopes and fears, is influenced by promise to the pursuit of virtue, and by threatening he is deterred

from the practice of vice. In the very nature of things, no man can be good without being benefited by it. Nor can any one be wicked without being injured by it. I would ask, whence came this constitution? and for what purpose? Is it not according to the ordination of Heaven? And was it not intended to secure every auxiliary to virtue, and every opposition to the indulgence of vice? The question, however, may be considered as conclusively settled by the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ as set forth in the text now under discussion. He who knows what man is, best knows what is suitable for man. Let, then, the full extent of the inducement offered in the promise of "a crown of life," as far as we can apprehend it, be seen and felt. The glorious reward of the faithful Christian, although future, is nevertheless certain. It will be given at the proper period, and will, therefore, have a commencement; but it will never end. But what is this future reward? It is not possible for human language to describe it. "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." God has, indeed, revealed them unto us, but even this revelation speaks of the glory of the inheritance of the saints as a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Our heavenly Master, in the promise which our text records, employs a figure which is at once expressive and impressive: it is a crown—a crown of life, differing in this respect from the crowns of earth, which are sometimes procured by the most wanton sacrifice of life, and often entail death on those whose heads they adorn, either by the destroying cares and solitudes of royalty, the violent outbreaks of the populace, or the intrigues of the wicked aspirants to a throne. The striking figure of "a crown of life" is well calculated to give us a general idea of the blessedness and glory of the heavenly state. It is life in triumph and exaltation! It is existence

in glorious perpetuity! It is the ceaseless and uninterrupted enjoyment of the bliss of heaven, in its hallowed society and divine employments, for ever and for ever! In view of this heavenly state, and heavenly place, the apostle Paul, in victorious and rapturous strains, made his last record of the triumphs of his faith in Christ: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not unto me only, but unto all them, also, who love his appearing."

I will add one more remark on this part of our subject. Eternal life, eternal bliss, and eternal glory, are all the gifts of Christ: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." The gratuity of the heavenly reward is one of its most interesting features, not only because the reward of merit, strictly speaking, would be far less glorious, (for what must be the character of the reward which can be deserved even by a faithful Christian?) but because it is the munificent gift of Christ, who, in rewarding his people, exhibits the amplitude of a divine benefactor. The value of the gift is enhanced by the giver. Such, and infinitely more, is the inducement offered in the text, to the performance of the duty therein enjoined. Can you ask for any thing more? Do you desire any thing stronger? Then be faithful until your death, and all will be well for evermore. Thus it was with that blessed man whose recent demise has been the occasion of these services. Who can doubt that Bishop Roberts was "faithful unto death," and that he has gone to receive the "crown of life?"

Your attention will now be invited to a brief sketch of the history of our deceased Superintendent. He was born, August 2, 1776, in Frederick county, Md., and was the

ninth child of Robert and Mary Roberts. Of his parents, I have not been able to procure any other information, than that in the year 1785 they removed to Ligonier Valley, Westmoreland county, Pa., their son Robert being at that time between eight and nine years old. His father, who was a cultivator of the soil, trained him to the art of husbandry. It is highly probable that neither the means nor the location of Mr. Roberts, admitted of any tuition of his son beyond that of the common country schools of the day. His mind was early turned to the absorbing subject of religion, and when he reached the fifteenth or sixteenth year of his age he united himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and at, or about the same time, he embraced the religion of Christ. Active and enterprising, while yet a youth under twenty years of age, he went, in company with four other young men, into that part of Pennsylvania then called Shenango, but now known as Mercer county. It was then in a wilderness state; and he there erected his cabin, commenced felling the forest and prepared to cultivate the newly cleared land. The necessities of his situation in this new location, led to the formation of habits of endurance and expertness as a hunter, the benefit of which he found in more than one instance in later life, when his pursuit of "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" was associated with scenes of the waste wilderness, as well as with those of "the city full." In the winter of 1798 he was married to Elizabeth Oldham, daughter of Thomas and Harriet Oldham, of York county, Pa. This venerable lady yet lives: but neither son nor daughter perpetuates their name—they were without offspring. It is said, that from the time of his conversion, he was much exercised on the subject of the Gospel ministry. He, however, had such views of the sacredness and awfulness of this work, and such consciousness of his deficiency of suitable qualifications for its performance, that he long withstood the

solicitation of Christian friends to exercise those gifts in public, with which the great Master had endowed him. But when fully convinced that a dispensation of the Gospel had been committed unto him, he conferred not longer with flesh and blood. He preached his first sermon about the close of the year 1801. He was admitted on trial in the Baltimore annual conference in April, 1802. Having performed the duties of his probation acceptably to the Church, he was received into full connection in 1804, and ordained a deacon; in which office he remained two years, and at their expiration was graduated to elder's orders, and ordained to the full powers of the Christian ministry. From the time he was received on trial by the Baltimore conference until 1813, he traveled and labored in the duties of his itinerant ministry with great and increasing acceptability within the bounds of the conference; in which period he received appointments in all the principal cities embraced within the range of the conference limits. In the spring of 1813 he was transferred to the Philadelphia conference, and for that, and the ensuing year, he was stationed in the city of Philadelphia. He was appointed presiding elder of Schuylkill district in 1815, and at the ensuing session of the conference, in 1816, (in the absence of the Bishop,) he was chosen to preside over the deliberations of that body, and to make the appointments of the preachers for the current year. The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church met in Baltimore in May, 1816, when he was called, by the suffrages of the delegates of the several annual conferences, in General conference assembled, to the arduous and responsible office of General Superintendent, or Bishop. This call was neither expected nor desired on his part; but so perfectly had he learned obedience as "a son in the Gospel," that he did on the occasion what others so much desired: he presented himself at the altar of dedication—took on him the sacred

vows of the ordination service, and was solemnly set apart, by the imposition of hands and prayer, for the work of an overseer in the Methodist Episcopal Church. This solemn service took place in the Church where we are now assembled. The ordination was performed by the venerable Bishop M'Kendree, assisted by several elders. The consecrator and the consecrated, after having together labored and suffered, have both passed off from this to another scene, and are again associated, I doubt not, in the fellowship of heaven. From the time of his ordination to the episcopacy until his death, a period of nearly twenty-seven years, he was a faithful and untiring officer of the Church, discharging, with a high degree of satisfaction to preachers and people, the weighty duties of his office. Bishop Roberts was the first married minister who was called to the general superintendency of our Church. From the time of his election to 1824 there was no provision made for the support of his family beyond the simple quarterage of himself and wife, which was but two hundred dollars per annum. Nothing is more obvious than the impossibility of the support of his family, small as it was, on this veriest pittance. What, then, was to be done? He had independence, not, indeed, in pecuniary resources, but of mind and heart. He sought the cabin of his youth, put such repairs on it as were practicable, and then placing under its humble roof his companion, and, it may be, an adopted child, he, for the space of three years, made it his family residence. But even in this wilderness cabin, he was not permitted to enjoy the sweets of domestic life except at very brief periods, and these far apart; for the duties of his oversight called him from one extremity of our country to another, so that sometimes an annual visitation would extend into twenty-four of our United States. He removed from Shenango, the place of his log cabin, to Lawrence county, in Indiana, in which he located his

family, and where he received the call of his Master to the occupancy of a mansion on high, and to "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," which had been reserved in heaven for him.

The personal appearance of Bishop Roberts was unusually prepossessing. His height, the ordinary stature of the men of his day, might have been five feet, eight or ten inches. His person, larger than that of the generality of men, was somewhat inclined to corpulency, but it was well proportioned. His face was indicative of intelligence and benevolence. His voice was soft—it was even melodious; but it had great compass and flexibility, capable of being modulated to almost any tone or cadence. His elocution was more than ordinarily good, even among good speakers. His enunciation was very distinct, and his delivery fluent. He was, indeed, an orator of great power. Combining with a memory of unusual tenacity a fine taste for the beautiful and sublime, he had stored his treasury "with things new and old," whence he derived topics of instruction and edification for his hearers. Without collegiate education, he was, nevertheless, a man of extensive reading, and was well informed in regard to men, things, and places. He was fond of the society of his friends, and was always accessible—always amiable and inviting in his manners, and always cheerful and pleasant. He was a popular preacher. His manner was ardent; but that ardor was modified by the gentleness of his spirit. Hearing him once never sufficed for the auditor—he desired to hear him again. As an officer of the Church, he was greatly esteemed. His bland and conciliating manners, won for him the affectionate regard of his brethren, who, at the same time, beheld a decision of character, and firmness of purpose, which impressively told all who were conversant with him, that the great and peculiar features of Methodism were not, by Bishop Roberts, to be sacrificed to ease

or friendship. I have more than once thought how appropriately the words of the sacred historian, in relation to Barnabas, might be applied to our Bishop: "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and faith: and much people were added to the Lord." A character of more exalted worth would not be suitable to man, yet, in a high degree, we are inclined to believe, Bishop Roberts was, through gracious influence, such a man as Barnabas.

He was, during the whole period of his ministry, a married man; and, as we have before remarked, the companion of his youth and old age still survives in the loneliness of widowhood. May grace sustain and comfort her under this painful bereavement; and may their kindred spirits again unite in that healthful clime, where the inhabitant shall never say, "I am sick." Although Bishop Roberts left no natural child behind him, yet there are many spiritual children, the fruits of his Gospel labors. Some of them are now on earth, and others are in paradise. O what a blissful scene will that be when all shall meet again; and meeting, shall part no more!

Of the closing scenes of the Bishop's life, we shall avail ourselves of the report given by eye and ear-witnesses, as furnished in the Western Christian Advocate of last week:

"At a New-Year's meeting in the town of Bedford, ten miles from his residence, he preached a heavenly sermon, and aided in the administration of the sacrament. On his way from this meeting, he suffered much from cold. This produced, or rather increased his asthma; which, after the middle of January, seemed to be aggravated. We subjoin the following account of his disease from Dr. Cavins, in a letter to the Rev. E. G. Wood: 'I was called to see Bishop Roberts on the 22d of February, but did not reach him until near eleven o'clock at night. I found him in great distress from congestion of the lungs, with a distressing cough and spitting of blood. He had been confined

ten or twelve days. From a full development of his case, I was fully convinced in my mind that he labored under some organic derangement of the heart. This, in connection with the fact that he had been afflicted with paralysis for the last eight or ten years, induced me to consider him dangerous. I, however, put him under treatment for the inflammatory symptoms. He appeared to mend; and I, with the rest of his friends present, were induced to hope, that he would shortly be restored to his usual health. But how sadly have we been disappointed! While asleep in a perspiration, he threw off the bed-clothes. The result was, that he got cold and awoke with a chill, from which he relapsed, and sunk immediately into a typhus fever. He lingered without much change in his case until he died, which was on the 26th of March, at half-past one o'clock, A. M.' On the 24th, 25th, and 26th of February, he seemed to be improving. The difficulty in breathing had been, in a good degree, removed. He conversed more freely with his friends, numbers of whom were constantly calling on him. He continued about in this condition, occasionally worse, and then better, up to the 12th or 13th of March, when his disease changed its aspect, and assumed the character of typhus fever. Two other physicians were called in to consult with Dr. Cavins. On the 24th of February, he was visited by the Rev. W. Terrell, and his intimate and devoted friend, John S. M'Donald, Esq., of Bedford, Ia. They found him very low—in considerable pain, and discharging from his lungs a tough, bloody phlegm. His breathing, however, was much better than it had been. He conversed but little during his sickness, owing, it is believed, to the pain it gave him. Even then he manifested but little inclination to converse. He evinced much patience in his sufferings. In the time of family worship, he exhibited much engagedness, especially when his own case was alluded to, frequently responding, 'Amen,'

with much fervor. On the morning of the 25th of February, Mr. Terrell went to his bedside, and inquired if he had any presentiment how his disease would terminate. He replied, 'No; when I was first taken sick, I apprehended nothing serious.' Mr. Terrell then asked him, if he had any anxiety about the matter. To which he replied, 'I have none. It is true there are some temporal matters I should like to see adjusted; but I have no fears. I think I have an assurance, should I die, that I should be at rest.' He then, with much feeling, added, 'but I have no plea, or righteousness of my own. After all that I have done, I feel that I am an unprofitable servant; but should I die, I die firmly in the belief of those doctrines I have been preaching for more than forty years.' This was all the conversation that took place at that time, as brother Terrell had to leave to attend to his appointment. Sometime between the 7th and 11th of March, or ten or fourteen days after his first visit, brother Terrell visited him the second time. He was then considerably worse, and manifestly sinking fast. He found, on inquiry of the family, that he had conversed very little since his former visit, unless with brother E. R. Ames, who spent one night with him. Mr. Terrell took occasion, when he appeared to be at ease, to ask him if he still felt the same confidence he had expressed to him on a former occasion. He replied, he did; and then observed, with a great degree of solemnity, 'It is a very solemn thing to die.' He spoke of the many ties that bound us to life, and how painful it was to sever them. The Bishop inquired if brother Terrell had not observed how little he had been disposed to converse; and assigned as a reason for it, that he had been flighty, and unable to fix his mind on those things which most interested his heart, but that he was now measurably relieved from this affliction. When Mr. Terrell went to bid him farewell, the Bishop took him by

the hand, and, after asking an interest in his prayers, observed, with a great deal of feeling, ‘Brother, I feel that if I die, I shall die in the Lord; and if I live, I shall live for the Lord.’ These were the last words which brother Terrell heard him speak. What expressions dropped from his lips afterward we have not been informed. Of the two conversations with him by Mr. Terrell, the latter remarks: ‘In neither of the conversations that I had with the Bishop did he evince any thing like *ecstasy*. Indeed, I thought he appeared to be tried; but in that sore conflict, he evidently had in lively exercise that faith that obtains the victory; and the tone and manner in which he expressed the last sentiment, showed that the victory was won.’ ‘In patience he possessed his soul, and held fast the beginning of his confidence firm unto the end.’ On the 14th of March he expressed his desire to his brother Lewis to arrange his temporal affairs, and requested him to write his will. This was accordingly done; and after having it read to him three or four times, he raised himself up in the bed, and explained to certain persons who were present as witnesses, his intention, &c., in calling them into his chamber. He then signed the will. From this to his death he conversed but little. His friend, Mr. M’Donald, was with him about ten days immediately preceding his death, and during all that time he conversed scarcely any. On several occasions he manifested great reluctance to take medicine, remarking, ‘It is of no use.’ About a week before his death, or about the 19th of March, his brother and Mr. M’Donald approached his bedside and asked him where he desired to be buried, in the event God should call him away. He replied, ‘I want to be buried decently, nothing more—no—no show—this poor tenement (laying his hand upon his breast) is not worth any thing more than a decent covering.’ He had personally designated a spot on his own farm upon which he desired to be buried; and in

reply to the question concerning the place, he referred to his former conversation. On the Friday previous to his death, while a number of persons were in his room, he inquired of the doctor whether it would not do to have prayers. The doctor replied that it would, if he desired it. A chapter was then read, and a prayer was offered up by a brother present. After this there was a momentary pause, and the Bishop said, 'Go on with your prayer meeting,' and then he himself called on two other persons to pray. Thus the last social meeting at which he was present was a prayer meeting in his own house. For some days previous to his death he lay perfectly quiet, and seemed not to suffer any pain. On Friday, the 24th of March, he began to show manifest symptoms of approaching dissolution; and at one time during the day, it was supposed he was dying. That paroxysm, however, passed off, and through the night of that day, and on Saturday, he lay comparatively quiet, yet sinking rapidly. On Saturday, at 10 o'clock at night, he was attacked with another paroxysm, and struggled, apparently, in great pain, until about half-past 1 o'clock on Sunday morning, when he expired. The Bishop disposed of his property, by will, to his relatives in part, and the balance to the Asbury University of the Indiana conference. That institution will, probably, get the proceeds of one hundred and fifty or two hundred acres of land. His wife remarked, that though she had often feared, when he was leaving home on his long tours, that he would never return, yet she never opposed him. She further stated that the Bishop had told her that he believed that he should die at home—a matter so desirable to both. She asked why he thought so? He said he had received such an impression when engaged in prayer.

"On Monday, the 27th of March, his funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. E. G. Wood, of the Indiana

conference, at the residence of the Bishop, to a large congregation, from Rev. xiv, 13. It was intended to proceed immediately to the grave; but, in consequence of the extreme inclemency of the weather, it was thought advisable to defer it to the next day. On Tuesday, his body was deposited in a grave on the spot which he himself had previously selected. It was in a remote corner of Lawrence county, Ia., in a secluded neighborhood; nor was it even near to any leading road—either horse tracks, or scarcely visible wagon tracks, indicated the direction to his farm. With the best directions, the stranger with difficulty could find the farm-house of Bishop Roberts. His grave was in a lonely corn-field, to which, from his late residence, in the very obscure village of Lawrenceport, a blind path conducts the traveler over hills and through a pathless forest. In this sequestered spot lie interred the remains of the senior Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, forty-one years a traveling preacher, and twenty-seven years a bishop.”*

Indulge me a few moments longer. I cannot close this discourse without addressing myself particularly to my brethren of the ministry. Brothers, our fathers are leaving us every year. Our Wesley, though long since departed, lives in our recollections, and in our feelings. Let us cherish his memory, and perpetuate it to our children, and our children’s children. Our Asbury, the apostle of American Methodism, than whom not one of our venerable fathers deserves more to be remembered, esteemed, and loved by their sons and successors, has ceased to animate us by his personal labors and counsels; but we, to this day, feel the impulse given to Methodism, in the unity and energy of its system, by his indefatigable diligence

* The remains of Bishop Roberts having been subsequently disinterred, are now entombed in the Campus of the Asbury University of Indiana conference.

and unwearied perseverance. Honored be the name, and cherished be the Christian and ministerial virtues of Francis Asbury, that uncanonical, yet Scriptural bishop. Where are Coke and Whatcoat?—men whose names can never fade from our memory. They have passed over Jordan, and are now in the promised land. With what thrilling interest I name M'Kendree, George, Emory, and Roberts. These were the men of our own times. We knew them—we loved them—we honored them. They are ours no longer, only in the results of their labors, and in their grateful remembrance. God be praised for such men. O, that he may continue to our bereaved Zion a succession of ministers and officers of the same stamp as those were who have been removed from its councils and service. We desire no better succession than this: a succession of pure doctrine, sound discipline, and an experimental and practical ministry of spirituality, purity, and power. Again, allow me to say, let us “remember those who have had the rule over us, and who have spoken unto us the word of God.” Let us follow them in their faith and practice, “considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ—the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

Brethren of the ministry, let us make the best use of the time and opportunities which may, for a season longer, be continued to us. O, make full proof of your ministry! The Lord is at hand!

Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, you have sustained a great loss by the death of our venerable patriarch. Let it be made the occasion of earnest and continued prayer to God, that he may cause a double portion of the spirit which he gave to our Elijah to rest upon his fellow-laborers in the cause of Christ; and, especially, that he may direct the attention of our next General conference to suitable persons for the episcopacy among us; that harmony, union, love, and prosperity may continue

and spread throughout the length and breadth of the wide-spread field of Methodism.

Ministers and Christians of all denominations, if the remarks that have just been made, shall, to you, seem to savor too much of sectarianism, I beg to assure you, that there is nothing of exclusiveness or bigotry connected with them. We are Methodists, and such we desire and intend to continue; but we honor the other branches of the general Church; and we can, and do rejoice in all your successes. Go on, brethren beloved, go on and prosper—all of you who preach “the truth as it is in Jesus!” “The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you as he hath promised you.” There is room enough in the land for us all to dwell peaceably together; and there is work sufficient for us all. Although we shall never, in this world, harmonize our views of Church polity, or even as to minor points of Christian doctrines, yet we can love each other, and fellowship each other, so long as there is agreement in the fundamental doctrines of Christ. When we get to heaven, we shall all see alike, believe alike, and feel alike. May you, and I, and all of us, be “faithful unto death, and receive a crown of life.” Amen.

SERMON III.

BY REV THOMAS A. MORRIS, D. D.,

ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

THE CHRISTIAN'S DUTY, HOPE, AND PRIVILEGE.

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear,” 1 Peter iii, 15.

SOLOMON said, “The fear of man bringeth a snare;” and Job said, “The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and

to depart from evil is understanding." Whoever seeks to please men, at the sacrifice of moral principle, will find himself, in the end, involved in disappointment and trouble; but he who aims to please God in all things, according to his revealed will, has nothing to fear. This doctrine is sustained by the words of Christ: "For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it." He who seeks to save his temporal life, by denying Christ, to avoid martyrdom, shall lose his soul; but he that is willing to die for Christ, if required, shall have life everlasting. The same doctrine is incidentally brought to view in our context: "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled." Peter, having thus warned the brethren of the trial of their faith, by persecution, and encouraged them to stand firm amidst every opposition, proceeds, in the language of the text, to lay down clearly the path of duty, which they were to pursue: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." We shall notice,

I. THE CHRISTIAN'S DUTY: "*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.*"

To sanctify, ordinarily means to make holy; but as God is of his own nature infinitely holy, and cannot become more so, the term sanctify, in that sense, cannot apply in this case. The apostle probably meant to teach that we should entertain right views of the character of God, and cultivate suitable feelings of reverence toward him. It is always profitable to meditate on the wisdom, power, and goodness of our Creator, as developed in creation, providence, and grace; and especially so, to

study his character as he has revealed it in his own word. For example, the proclamation of his name to Moses in the mount: "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Whoever thus studies the character of God, will be careful to avoid, not only profane swearing, cursing, blasphemy, and perjury, but likewise all lightness of expression, and irreverent thoughts concerning him; and will become more and more impressed with the salutary truth, "Holy and reverend is his name."

Again: to sanctify the Lord God in the heart, is to set HIM apart as the object of spiritual worship, to the exclusion of all others. Idolatry was the killing sin of the Pagan world. And as the Jews were surrounded by the idolatrous worship of the heathen nations, they were in more danger from that quarter than any other. Hence, this point was so strongly, pointedly, and frequently guarded by the holy prophets. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth." Even Christ and his apostles had occasion to warn the Christians against the same danger. Paul said to the Corinthians, "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one." And Christ said, "God is a spirit: and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." The plain import of holy Scripture on this subject, is, none but the true God may be worshiped, and he *must* be worshiped by all men. God requires us to worship him; and he has a right to make such requisition; a right founded in creation: for "He hath

made us, and not we ourselves;" a right founded in sovereignty, as our only "Lord and lawgiver;" a right founded in preservation: "For in him we live, and move, and have our being;" and, finally, a right by purchase: "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Moreover, to sanctify the Lord God in the heart, is to embrace him with our affections. It is not sufficient to incorporate his name in our articles of religion and forms of worship: that name must be engraven on the tablets of our hearts. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches: 'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.'" Among the ancients the criminal courts used the white stone as a token of acquittal. Here it may mean justification through faith in Christ, and the new name written therein, the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. When a certain lawgiver asked our Lord which was the great commandment of the law, "Jesus said unto him, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.'" Whoever obeys this command, sanctifies the Lord God in his heart; and while he performs the greatest duty, he enjoys the highest privilege allotted to man on earth. "God is love: and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."

II. THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE.

"The hope that is in you" is different from what the penitent seeker of salvation feels. He hopes, that is, he desires and expects the joy of pardon for all his sins; and he has good reason to do so, because Christ died for him, and has promised mercy to all who seek it, saying, "Ask, and it shall

be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." But the Christian is pardoned—is saved from condemnation and fear, and his hope must be in regard to something else. Hope always has reference to the future. It is the desire and expectation of something not yet in possession, but which may be obtained in the proper use of the means.

The Christian hopes for supporting grace in all coming time. He is in a state of entire dependence, and every moment needs the merits of the Savior's blood; but there is no cause of discouragement, seeing, Jesus "ever liveth to make intercession" for him. And there stands "the throne of grace," where "we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." He who has taught us to ask for "our daily bread," will not withhold it from us. What will be our fightings without, or fears within hereafter, we know not; but one thing we do know, God has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Possibly we may be called to endure fiery trials; but while we are favored with ordinary grace for ordinary difficulties, the Lord has provided special blessings for the day of tribulation. He says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." And as often as these days of trouble come, delivering grace will come with them to the faithful. "He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee."

The Christian hopes especially for support in death. This hope is well sustained by "exceeding great and precious promises" interspersed through all the "lively oracles" of God. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death." What a contrast! great in life, but greater still in a dying hour. We are glad that it is written in the book of

Psalms, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The term saints applies to all who are made holy through faith in the blood of Christ. The death of such is not an indifferent event with the Lord, who does not lightly, or without consideration, give them over to the "pale horse and his rider." When God suffers his saints to die, it is always for sufficient reasons, whether we understand them or not. It may be to terminate their painful and protracted sufferings; or to take them from the evil to come; or to glorify his grace in their final triumph, for the benefit of others; or to give them the crown of life for which they have fought long and hard. But whatever may be the reason, their death is precious in the sight of the Lord, and that alone ought to reconcile them to it. Again: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." How encouraging is this promise! After conquering the world, the flesh, and Satan, we shall conquer death, the latest foe to man; and as we enter the lonely valley, feel in our souls the peace of God, which passeth understanding. Why then linger with such a strange fondness on the shore of time? Our final home is over Jordan, and many of our best friends are there, waiting our arrival. Above all, Jesus is there, and, in due time, will come to pilot us over. To him we may safely commit our all, as did the inspired Psalmist: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

The Christian hopes for the resurrection of his body. He regards death as a pleasant sleep, from which he expects to awake at the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. While his spirit, renewed after the image

of God, is borne by angels to Abraham's bosom, his flesh rests in hope of a glorious resurrection. On this point, as well as others, his faith standeth not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God: it is sustained not by human philosophy, but by divine revelation. This truth was partially revealed to Job, Daniel, and other Old Testament saints; but it remained for Christ to express it in all its strength and beauty. He only could say, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." And not only those who believe, for he says, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." After our Savior had taught the doctrine of the resurrection by precept, he confirmed it by example. As touching this matter, he proved himself to be the "first fruits of them that slept" and the "first-born of many brethren." And he says to all his people, "Because I live, ye shall live, also." The apostles, too, dwelt much upon this doctrine, for the consolation of the brethren. Nothing can be more consoling to the way-worn and weather-beaten soldier of the cross, than the assurance that his body, now afflicted with heat and cold, hunger and thirst, pain and sickness, and finally with death and decomposition, shall live again—live for ever—free from toil, from sickness and decline, where he will ever be young, vigorous and joyful. And if we lose pious friends, what comfort to know, they only sleep in Jesus. When Lazarus was in his tomb, Martha was overwhelmed with grief; but "Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again." The same is true of our departed Christian friends; and if we follow them as they followed Christ, we shall live with them in heaven, for ever. But how changed in appearance: they were sown

natural bodies, but shall be raised spiritual bodies. When we committed them to the dark and lonely grave, their appearance was such as filled us with mournfulness, and for many long days and weeks their death-like image was constantly present to our minds. But now take the telescope of faith, look forward to the resurrection morn, fix on your departed ones, and obtain a clear vision: and instead of paleness, you behold,

“On the cold cheek of death smiles and roses are blending;
And beauty immortal awakes from the tomb.”

Finally, the Christian hopes, that after the reunion of his soul and body, he will be glorified with Christ in heaven. This hope is well supported by the authority of holy Scripture. While the Lord Jesus was offering up the last general prayer for his people, just before he surrendered himself to his enemies to be offered in sacrifice for the sins of the world, he said, “Father, I will that they, also, whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” To be with Jesus in heaven, and behold his glory, implies all that we could desire. Paul took a strong view of this subject when he said, “And if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” These blessed promises will be fulfilled by our Lord and Savior “when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.” The influence which such a prospect should exert upon our hearts, our deportment, and our enjoyments, is better expressed by the apostle than any language at our command, where he says, “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and

your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

III. THE CHRISTIAN'S PRIVILEGE, *which is expressed in these words*, "*And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.*"

The hope of the Christian, as above described, is not the result of a heated imagination, or of a mind sprung from its proper balance by the force of fanaticism: he has a reason, or rather many well-founded reasons for it.

One reason is, Christ died for his sins, rose again for his justification, and ever liveth to make intercession for him. This blessed truth is plainly declared in the word of God. And having Christ for our Redeemer, Savior, and Advocate, we may well entertain hope of final success.

Another reason of the hope that the Christian feels, is founded in the ever-faithful promises of God to his children. These promises, while they extend to the Church, collectively, in all ages and countries, come home to the case of each true believer, in every variety of circumstances, with as much force and efficacy, as if they were all designed for his exclusive benefit. And they are yea and amen in Christ: "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us." That is, they are made in reference to the mediation of the Son of God; they are true in themselves, and will all be faithfully verified to such as truly believe in Him. We have already tested many of these promises, and not one has failed. For example, Jesus says, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." This is one of the plainest, strongest, sweetest promises in the Bible; and it is among the first to be tested. The moment a sinner begins to repent and try to believe on the Savior, he needs just such a promise; for the question immediately arises—

and we know with what force it is urged upon us by Satan—will God hear and answer me? how can he save such a sinner as I am? I deserve nothing but endless banishment and everlasting burnings. Yet when we came to Christ, and threw our naked, helpless souls upon him, with all our guilt and misery, he did not cast us out—did not reject us. No, he accepted us graciously, and loved us freely, and gave us peace in believing, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Again: the blessed Savior says, “Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” How often have we labored in vain to relieve our hearts of an intolerable load of anguish, till we came to Jesus and found rest to our souls. Thousands and millions of his people have cast their care upon Him who careth for them, and found relief—have rolled their burden upon him and found rest. Now let it be remembered, that Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and having fulfilled such promises as we have had occasion to plead, he will verify to the faithful soul all the “exceeding great and precious promises” of the Gospel, and that to the end; for all these promises are made by the God of truth, sealed by the blood of his Son, and applied by his Holy Spirit.

Another reason of the Christian's hope is found in the testimony of dying saints, both in ancient and modern times. Infidels, with all their self-confidence in life, generally betray an awful misgiving in death; and many of them in view of the future, as revealed in that solemn hour, renounce their principles, being afraid to walk into the presence of their insulted Judge. But with Bible Christians, the case is exactly opposite. Though some of them may have occasion to regret their delinquency in practice, no one of them has ever been known, in his last moments, to abandon his principles. Every experimental Christian is armed with courage not his own—it is derived from faith in Jesus Christ. He feels in his heart the love of God,

which is sweeter than life and stronger than death. For him death has no sting, and the grave has no terror. Men of natural firmness of mind, tempered with principles of philosophy, may evince a degree of calmness under a calamity which they cannot avert; but this bears no comparison with the triumph of faith in the dying Christian. Many men of nervous habits through life, are filled with peace and joy when dying in the faith of Christ. Even timid females, who have not natural courage sufficient to bear them through a dark room of their own habitation in health, are known to pass fearlessly through the gate of death, in obedience to the call of their Savior. Many of our pious friends, with whom we once lived, and talked, and worshiped, have passed over the valley made dark by the shadow of death, and having gained the heavenly rest, are waiting our arrival. While some of these were resigned and peaceful, others were exceeding joyful in prospect of the eternal state. We could, if necessary, name some by whom we stood when they were covered with the cold sweat of death, and longed to depart, that they might be with Jesus, which is far better than life with all its pleasures. Their last faltering accents were spent in praising God; and when the power of articulation had entirely failed, they raised their hands, already cold in death, and waved them in peaceful triumph over the last enemy, and, with a heavenly smile, slept in Jesus. So may it be with us, and so we trust it will be.

These are some of the reasons of the hope that is in us; and we should be always ready to give an answer to every man who interrogates us on the subject. If he take the ground of an objector, we should be so armed with the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit as to ward off the attack, and "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." Or, if the inquirer desires to know the way of life, and asks for information, we should be ready to

answer from experience, and give a reason of the hope that is in us. And in order that we may be always ready to answer every man, so as to benefit him and promote our own welfare, we must live as becometh the Gospel, growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, with a conscience void of offense toward God and man, and striving daily for the witness of the Spirit, that we are the children of God.

In the exercise of this Christian privilege, to give every man an answer concerning the hope that is in us, we must not forget to do it "with meekness and fear;" that is, with humility on account of our unworthiness, and fear, or a proper sense of weakness and responsibility. No confidence that we may have in the correctness of our principles, or the goodness of our cause, should ever betray us into the indiscretion of answering wittily, pertly, or in the spirit of self-confidence, but with that seriousness and lowliness which the importance of the subject requires. If there is any subject within the range of human thought on which men and women should speak guardedly, it is that of the work of God's Spirit upon their hearts. It is true that Christians may and ought to be cheerful, but there is no room here for levity, or recklessness. We allow there are extremes both ways: while some are too self-confident in the exercise of their gifts, and too forward in making their professions on all occasions, others are too timid for their own enjoyment, or the good of their brethren. Both extremes should be avoided. Of the two, however, the latter is far less dangerous than the former: it is better to say too little than too much. We have known many of those timid Christians, who were so much afraid of professing more than they could live up to, that they scarcely dared to make any direct profession of religion in the form of words, though their daily practice showed to all around them that they had Christ in them, the hope of glory.

Many of these we have observed closely to the end of life, and found that their last days were their best days. God was better to them than all their fears. The clouds which had so long obscured their moral sky gradually disappeared, and, in the evening of life, they enjoyed the calm sunlight of God's reconciled countenance. For the benefit of all sincere Christians, and especially those who answer "with meekness and fear," we conclude with the beautiful and highly encouraging words at the end of the Epistle General of Jude: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

SERMON IV.

BY REV. L. L. HAMLINE, D. D.,

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CHRISTIAN ANGER.

"Be ye angry and sin not," Eph. iv, 26.

ANGER is commonly reckoned among the vices; and so seldom, since the fall, is it worthy of a different classification, that the inspired writings mostly fall in with the usage. Hence it is written, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and *anger*, be put away from you." Yet the text represents anger as of possible innocence and propriety, not only prescribing it a limit, but also affording it a license; from which the inference is legitimate, that the passion is not evil in itself, but becomes so by the unwarranted forms, or occasions of it.

If this is questioned, we have only to observe how oppositely the vices are treated in this same chapter,

wherein theft and falsehood are unconditionally forbidden, no possible form of either being allowed. And in addition to these hints, we must remember, that while theft and falsehood are prohibited in the decalogue, anger is not embraced in that preceptive summary. Connect, with these considerations, the fact that our Savior was angry and yet immaculate, and we are compelled to believe that there are harmless and praiseworthy forms of this passion.

But while innocent anger is possible, we shall all agree that it is difficult. In its best ordered forms it conducts us into the neighborhood of sin—into a region full of dangers. The qualifications of unoffending anger are so many and so vital, as amount almost to a prohibition; which we shall easily perceive as we proceed to discuss the question, “*How can we be angry and not sin?*”

Engrossing the principal points of the inquiry, we propose that Christian anger (by which we mean such anger as Christ experienced and warrants) has just PROVOCATIONS, MEASURES, MANIFESTATIONS, and PERIODS. Let us consider each.

I. CHRISTIAN ANGER HAS JUST PROVOCATIONS.

To assure ourselves of a sufficient provocation, we should inquire,

1. *If the reputed offender has done wrong.* This may prove a perplexing question. Blinded by interest, we cannot safely trust ourselves to decide it. What we call wrong may happen to be right; the other party may vindicate it—may urge against us cross-complaints, and set forth himself as the aggrieved person. Differences of opinion, in such cases, may be expected, and it will be safe to learn the views of disinterested observers; and if they decide against us, abide their verdict. But if the wrong be clearly and confessedly on the other side, we must proceed to inquire,

2. *Whether that wrong was intended.* If not, though

it may put us to inconvenience, it should not provoke our anger. Let us view it as a trial of Providence, and study how it may subserve a gracious end, by schooling our hearts to meekness—that most difficult attainment. Our Christian graces need a discipline of this sort to strengthen and mature them. And while the trial presses on us, shall we indulge the very tempers which it was sent to mortify? It is unreasonable to be angry at an inadvertent trespasser. A sailor will sometimes curse the winds, and the currents, and the tides, when they happen to be adverse; and shall we, Christians, do worse, by indulging a heat of rage at the erring *fellow-mortal* who, by mere mistake, has wounded us? 'This were unworthy of our *nature*, vicious as it is, and were an utter reproach to *grace*. But if the wrong seem intended, we must wait to inquire,

3. *If that intention can be proven.* Nothing can warrant anger but the most conclusive evidence that occasions do exist. And if the *wrong* be indisputable, malice must not be presumed, lest the charity which “thinketh no evil” should be wounded. Grant that malice is probable in the eye of impartial observation, yet that probability should wait for proof, instead of which there may come up counter-proofs, dispelling our suspicions, and opening to our love a way of peace and fellowship. There is an argument for this delay in the proverbial carelessness of kind and easy tempers, which often inflict a wound when they propose to heal one.

If anger thus delay, we are sure to lose nothing. Let the wrong prove to have been malicious, that very delay will show that our passion is not blind, but blends with a fixed and righteous principle far more formidable than any fretful impulse of our nature. The proof here spoken of must be not only of a wrong, but of malice in the actor. And if this be made out, we must inquire,

4. *If the trespasser has repented.* Repentance cannot

atone for sin, or repair a wrong committed ; but it shows a will for both, if they were possible. Christ forgives believing penitents without impossible restitution, having himself atoned to justice in their behalf. Shall we spurn whom Christ forgives, receives, and loves? As we prize the hope of pardon, we must not—dare not do it. Do we not pray, “forgive our debts, as we forgive our debtors?” What is the force of such a prayer to them who spurn the penitent offender against their peace or dignity? The repentance of our enemy must finish off our anger, or we, in turn, become malicious.

And we must be forward to perceive the tokens of his penitence. Our charity must watch with fond desire for that moral state in him, over which angels will rejoice. We must not regret, like Satan, to see repentance in our foe. We must not cavil, like him who said, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Let us, vile and guilty, expecting heaven by gracious acquittals which cost the blood of Christ, be sure to pardon a fellow-servant who lies in prostrate penitence at our Redeemer’s feet. But suppose the offender betrays an after-malice: we must then inquire,

5. *Whether we have used due means to bring him to repentance.* This we are solemnly bound to do. And what *are* due means is not left to our discretion, but laid down with great precision in the word of God: “If thy brother offend against thee, go and tell him his fault.” Hereafter, this and cognate Scriptures will be more fully considered. It is enough to say at present, that this visit to the offender must go before all anger. The errand may be ungrateful, but Jehovah has imposed it. And the precept is one of mercy toward both parties, promising to “save souls from death, and hide a multitude of sins.” The message is peace-making, and the obedient messenger may well be “called the child of God.” To mediate

peace in matters which do not involve ourselves, is well pleasing to the Almighty; but to do it under wrongs inflicted by him whose guilty passions we would pacify, is sublimely meek and Christ-like. It brings honor to religion. Its utility is past reckoning. Under this Gospel regimen, more than half the quarrels of mankind might be healed, and seldom should we see "budding mischiefs" ripen into cruel enmities.

And if this measure fail, others must be resorted to before we can innocently assume the final ground: "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man, and a publican." If a man of the world offend against us, to visit him and urge our claim to restitution or concession, will show a spirit of forbearance adapted to commend the religion which we love.

Finally: if these prescribed means move not the heart to penitence, the five particulars above-named may be reckoned a sufficient provocation to be angry. But with this just occasion, we must see that our anger be not sinful.

II. IN ITS MEASURES.

Nothing should provoke us to a burning, blinding rage. Sinless anger is a deliberate, clear-sighted, strong displacency. In regard to its degrees, we must observe the following cautions:

1. *It must be so moderated as not to hurt ourselves.* In its usual forms, it is a violent, peace-disturbing passion, and, unrestrained, makes the bosom a volcano. When its fires begin to kindle, we may well warn the soul as the apostle did the jailer, "Do thyself no harm." There have been instances in which the hangman's rope was not more fatal than this passion; for the wrath of the immortal was more than the mortal could endure. But far short of such excesses, less suddenly, but not less surely, the passion is soul-killing. Religion, especially in its higher life, withers under its blight; and must wither, because the gracious

agency which sustains it, at first withstood, is finally withdrawn. Will the peaceful dove rest amidst the battle fires? No more will the Holy Spirit dwell in bosoms convulsed by raging passions. The heavenly Guest must have a peaceful home. Let us be sure, then, so to moderate our anger as not to drive the Holy Spirit from our hearts. Then it will not wound us. Like some other passions, sinful until cleansed, let it be crucified with Christ, and with Christ rise again, and then, untouched by the hand which nature would put forth to it, it will be always heaven-ascending, lifting us upward toward the ever-blessed God. Each sanctified emotion tends to this result, deepening our devotion, kindling in us warmer love for man, and for our Maker. Anger which does it not is sinful, and brings a snare.

2. *Anger in just measures does not injure others.* To retaliate is always sinful. God reserves that office to himself: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Shall we usurp his rod of punishment? Then he will smite the smiter. Whatever may provoke us, let us observe the mandate, "Neither render evil for evil unto any man." How exceedingly comprehensive is this precept. Here *all* methods of revenge are reprobated. Neither openly nor covertly—by violence, nor by the subtilty of sly insinuation, may we molest a foe, except for unwanton self-defense.

Some men's anger approaches madness. It unfits them for society, and makes their going abroad unsafe. Enraged, they do not always distinguish friends from foes. Their hurricane of passion pours its vengeance upon all, and plunges the offending and the harmless in one common doom. Yet less to be dreaded are they still, than a noiseless class of enemies, who, like the coiled serpent in your unsuspected pathway, make sure but silent work of it. There are ways of mischief-doing, which employ no

bowie-knife. A sharpened tongue can butcher. The eye can blink—the lip can curl—making a wound deeper and more painful than lead or steel can give. All these methods of revenge we must for ever eschew. Could we conceal them from Omniscience, the question of right would still, or *ought* to press upon our conscience. We must, then, guard our anger with most industrious vigilance, and pray as well as guard. It is difficult for anger to do or say nothing wantonly to molest a persecutor. Our unsanctified nature cannot compass it. As to the world, its very *friendship* is less kind. O, what a world it is, through the revengeful, treacherous conduct of mankind! What oceans of misery are supplied by countless streams from that one fountain!

The first thought of revenge, from whatever provocation, should alarm us; for it is of hell's injection. If the spark be quenched at once, all is safe. But for this, the conception must instantly warn us to the closet, where, in pleadings for our foe, all embittered feelings shall be sweetened into charity. The conclusion is, that whenever our displeasure would inflict evil on an enemy, it is *sinful in its measure*.

3. *Anger in just degrees will do good to its object.* It blends with a benevolence so fervent and diffusive, that *not to injure* cannot satisfy it. Some men abstain from injuring a foe, yet feed on his distresses, inflicted by other hands. They will not throw down his fence, and waste his harvests; but neither will they repair a breach, and eject the roving herd. They will not fire his dwelling, nor mourn if others fire it. They are not murderers, but cannibals. Others slay—they eat. Is it sinless? "This wisdom cometh not from above; but is earthly, sensual, devilish." It has the cruelty without the courage of maturity, infernal malice. When Christ was angry, "being grieved for the hardness of their hearts," did his passion

crave to feast itself on his erring creatures' sufferings? Nay; his bowels yearned to bless them. Such must be our anger. It must fulfill that blessed precept, "Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which persecute you."

As to the measures of our anger, then, it must be so moderated as not to *hurt ourselves*, injure *others*, or restrain our *kind offices* toward the *subjects of it*.

III. CHRISTIAN ANGER HAS JUST MANIFESTATIONS.

Here are two things which we will separately notice.

1. *Our anger must be manifested.* Concealment alone will make it sinful. This should not be forgotten. Some take concealment to be a virtue, because it veils a wrong from the public eye which might otherwise become an element of social discord. But have they forgotten that our Savior forbids concealment, or at least enjoins a limited disclosure? "If thy brother offend against thee, go and show him his fault." This language creates a solemn obligation. It binds the injured man to go and state to the offender the occasions of his displacency or anger. And lest grief or pride should prevent him, the precept is varied thus: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother and then come and offer thy gift." These two precepts cover the whole ground, and leave no license to either party for delay. Whether more or less to blame, or not at all, is equal, so far as this interview for peace is concerned. If both instantly obey, the parties may meet in the public highway, so intent on making up the difference, that the "sun will not go down upon their wrath."

"Reconciliation" involves a statement of the offense and its occasions. To secure so good an end, we are commanded to withhold the sacrifice and adjourn religious rites. In the spirit of this precept, should not the very

closet be forsaken through our haste to pacify, lest our devotions become offensive unto God?

These directions of our Lord were probably the basis of that language in the Discipline, "Tell every one under your care what you think wrong in his conduct and temper, else it will fester in your heart; make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom."

"It will fester in your heart"—that is a true philosophy. And to conceal our disgust toward a personal adversary will produce the same effect, and kindle unholy flames within us. The only way to cast the fire out of our bosoms is to declare our displacency to him who has provoked it.

2. *But this manifestation of anger must be just.* We must keep in mind the object of our interview, namely, reconciliation; or, that we may "gain our brother." "Go and be reconciled," says Jesus. We must go, then, with winning words, and prosecute our errand with meek but manly gentleness. We must convince the trespasser that we are not implacably offended, and that we claim, as grounds of peace, no more than he can well afford to yield. Toward a brother in the Church, the Scriptural mode of manifesting anger, though adverted to already, will be noticed more at length.

(1.) "Go and tell him his fault." Tell *him*—the offender. It is a common error to tell others, but not him. And who can fail to see that this is a "war-measure." If we whisper the wrong to others, it will soon fly abroad, and the whole town may know it before it reaches the wrong-doer. And when the floating proverb comes to him, through the circles of social gossip, it must provoke resentment and foreclose the way to peace. It leaves him no hope so to explain, concede, or vindicate, as to screen the parties from public reprehension and reproach. Yield him the advantage of knowing before his neighbors do, the

nature of your grievances, so that, without their intermeddling, he may make you restitution.

(2.) 'Tell him his fault "*between thee and him alone.*" Throw in his way no avoidable embarrassments, or you set him on an effort at self-vindication. Strengthen the motive to concession by tendering him a confidential interview, which ought to win his gratitude and move the hardness of his nature toward an endeavor after peace.

(3.) Should this fail, "*take with you one or two witnesses,*" and with their aid repeat the effort. They will testify your zeal for peace, and, if discreetly chosen, their persuasive mediation may contribute much toward the healing of the breach. If still unsuccessful,

(4.) "*Tell it to the Church.*" Summon the offender before her tribunals, and there let him answer to your complaints. If he refuse submission to the order of the Church, or slight the decision of her courts, rendered according to her usages or canons,

(5.) "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." Decline to hold communion with him as a Christian, and no longer recognize him in that endearing fellowship. This is the severest form of Christian anger. It warrants neither hatred nor revenge; for either would be sinful toward a heathen man or publican. But it authorizes a display of strong and spirited displacency. To meet the offender with flushed cheek, and repel him in a rage, may not befit the meekness of true Christian dignity. But reproof can be administered by formal, slight obeisances. And we not only may, but *must* (for the phrase is mandatory) withhold from him the tokens of fraternal and complacent love. To say nothing of ourselves, this is due to the Church, whose honor is involved in the obstinate misbehavior of her refractory member.

If not a member of the Church, can we pursue a better course than that comprising the first three steps herein laid

down? We cannot take it before the Church, whose jurisdiction reaches only to her members. But if we may, in part, let us adopt the counsels of our Lord, rather than the devices of an erring human intellect. Christ's precept is, doubtless, based on reason, or adapted to the human constitution, and should, therefore, be obeyed. If we gain no more by this course than salutary restraints on our own rising passions, it were a vital benefit. But, possibly, our ungodly enemy may see that our religion is not powerless, but holds in check the impetuous rage of nature, and subdues the soul to Christ; which may commend it to his notice, and move him to seek its renovating grace.

Thus must Christian anger have just manifestations; or, exhibit itself in forms prescribed by holy writ. This is especially binding between members of the Church, and, as far as circumstances will permit, should be carried out in the Christian's dealings toward men of the world, who know, or may know, what the Gospel requires of us.

IV CHRISTIAN ANGER MUST HAVE JUST PERIODS.

The heat of it must be quenched, though the principle of it may continue, if need be, through life. But we will notice more particularly the risings and the quietings of it.

1. As to the risings of anger, we must carefully regard the injunction, "slow to wrath." It is unsafe to leap suddenly to the summit-level of this passion; for by such a daring movement the soul must gather an impetus which will carry it too high. Better try an inclined plane, and ascend with careful observation, learning where to stop, and preserving enough of self-possession to make a stand. To get angry as here proposed is a deliberate procedure. Waiting to muster the provocations, adjust the measures, and mete out the manifestations, must, of course, prevent haste. And if it seem a slow business to men of choleric inclination, they should consider that these necessary haltings guaranty the very thing enjoined by our blessed Lord.

But this deliberation is important, aside from the principle of obedience. It will save ourselves and others many and great mortifications. A temper which kindles into flashes almost without a touch, is a perpetual self-annoyance. It is like burning at the stake. The victim of this irascibility should be pitied. His soul hath a cutaneous disorder, which fills and defiles it with uneasy inflammations. Or it hath St. Vitus' dance, and for its own sake should hurry after a cure.

Others, also, are annoyed. It is a spreading, as well as an uncomfortable sickness, touching with unclean contagions the undiseased around us. One petulant spirit in a community of thousands, will contrive to work half the number into a state of fretful discords. It is a drawback on one's bliss to fall into a street, or ward, beset by such a nuisance. One can bear sights and smells of every disagreeable sort better than proximity to such a moving shell of mischiefs, overcharged with mortal mixture of missile and combustible, and ready, you know not when, for unprovoked explosions. For these, and many more reasons, how needful the Scriptural caution, "slow to wrath."

2. *As anger must be slow in its beginnings, so must it be quick in its decline.* "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." That is, quench the intemperate fervors of your anger. For the mild and firm tokens of displacency may last as long as the offender is relentless. But, so far as a great heat of passion is concerned, let it cool before night-fall into quiet, holy principle. The "*wrath*" of anger must not stay with us. An electric shock or two is all that we can bear. Long continued, it will turn to a deep and burning malice. Would you sleep in contact with a battery, whose strong galvanic force distorts the very limbs and features? Make haste to pacify thy rage. Quench these lightnings of the soul. Before the sun go down, seek and find that "peace which passeth

all understanding," then go and take thy rest. That is sinless anger, whose risings and whose quietings agree with these divine warnings.

Having pointed out the qualifications of Christian anger, it may be profitable to observe,

1. *That such anger is rare.* In this all will agree, even though they should affirm that other forms of this passion are innocent. Of the anger here described, where shall we find examples? They may be more frequent than volcanoes, and may create less surprise. But shall we, on this account, lower the standard of Christian affection? We are aware it may be urged, that "unless we resent injuries, a proud world will trample on us." Doubtless it will. But did it not trample on Christ and his apostles? Happy for the bleeding cause of Christ, when its adherents shall "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but *rather reprove them!*" Happy for the cause, when Christians shall pursue a course so unlike the world, that the world will find in their nonconformity a provocation to trample on them as it did on saints of old!

2. *Sinful anger is very common.* This, we presume, will not be disputed. For what a world of rage this has been, from the days of Cain until now. War is the grand feature of its history. If all the resentments and wrongs of six thousand years could be snatched from their oblivion and wrought into living chronicles, who but demons could endure the mere recital of them? This is, indeed, an angry world. Yet if the Church were placable, it would afford a shade of relief to this dark picture. But is she? As a general rule, even among professing Christians, is not anger a resentful passion, rather than a Christ-like indignation? Her members often forbear revenge; but, alas! it is often more from a dread of retribution than from the restraints of holy charity. Perhaps revenge *is* sought, not tragically, but in the subtil whispers of detraction,

poured into the willing ears of connivers at the mischief. Forgiveness, full and free, is little practiced in the Church, except for selfish ends. Many seem to forgive; but it is often the suppression of a curse, not the hearty pouring forth of blessings, as it should be, to merit that designation.

3. *Sinful anger is a great evil.* It is injurious to the soul. To this how many backsliders owe their fall, and how many reprobate apostates their ruin. Their history warns us of Satan's devices. Well may the apostle add, in close connection with the text, "neither give place to the devil;" for whoever surrenders himself to the dominion of resentful passion, moves Satan to take the plenary *seizin* of his heart.

The Church, also, suffers. How deep her wounds inflicted by the rancorous altercations of her children! Schools of theology have waged against each other wars of wordy wrath, and from the heated dialectics of their ambitious strife, have found their way to each other's bosoms, and finished with bloody steel, or martyring fires, what was commenced in polemical disputation.

4. *We should watch against anger in our own hearts.* This especially becomes us in the midst of strong provocations. It is assumed by many, and may be true, that we have now strong provocations, and should be filled with "holy indignation." If the provocations do exist, we need to exercise an answering care and caution. In quiet seas, trust a careless helmsman; but on a lee-shore, under the pressure of a storm, take care who is at the helm.

Let it be granted that this is a day of rebuke—that men's passions are let loose, and threaten to lay waste and destroy, do we not need a calm and guarded temper to meet so dread a crisis? It may be safer to stop short, than to reach the utmost limits of Christian anger. It is said there is a call for "holy indignation." It may be there is

a louder call for holy caution, lest our indignation become *unholy*. And have we not experimented in holy indignation? Let us turn awhile to holy self-abasement, and get into the dust. Prayer may help us where indignation fails; and prayer is out of the neighborhood of danger; while they who use that weapon, "indignation," are like men battling on the brink of a precipice in a dark and stormy midnight.

Let all men be angry, as Christ was, on suitable occasions. But is there not, just now, too strong a tendency in this direction. It is *easy to be angry*. It may come of existing provocations; but we must not forget that Satan is wont to *go*, and *stay*, and *mix* with all things; and why not, then, with these very provocations? When in Job's day, the sons of God would present themselves before the Lord, he must needs go along, though the errand seemed forbidding. He went, too, with a bold parable, and sued out a bold commission. May not that evil spirit whose work was then so subtil and so formidable, contrive to seize on these many provocations, and use them to our disadvantage and discomfiture? "What I say unto you, I say unto all, WATCH!" is the warning of our Lord.

5. *Sanctified anger is always safe*. On the words, "Looking round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts," Mr. Wesley says, "Angry at the sin, grieved at the sinner—the true standard of Christian anger. But who can separate anger at the sin, from anger at the sinner? None but a true believer in Christ." To do it with assurance, we need mature grace. Feeble faith brings too small a measure of the Spirit. If any sinful taint remains in our affections, will it not show itself in anger? If so, we may not hope to be angry without sin, unless we are "crucified with Christ." He who has the *mind* of Christ—who can say, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," may, like Him whose life

then reigns over a crucified nature, be “angry at the sin, and grieved at the sinner.”

May He circumcise our hearts to this end. May “the very God of peace sanctify us wholly,” and teach us what changes his almighty power can work in our very worst passions. Let the whole Church plead for this as the voice of one man. And let each of her members look to Christ, and be “healed of whatsoever disease he has.” Look thyself, O reader! look to the ALMIGHTY SAVIOR! Look to him as ready to save—ready to “save to the uttermost.” “Say not in thine heart who shall ascend into heaven.” The Purifier is near at hand, and not afar off. Already his arm is revealed. “Believe the report,” precious soul, believe now and be saved; believe, and thou shalt be blessed indeed. “Now unto him that is able to do *exceeding abundantly* above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us; unto him be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”

SERMON V.

BY REV. EDMUND S. JANES, D. D.,

ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

THE AGENCY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE PROMOTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

DELIVERED ON OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE CENTENARY OF
WESLEYAN METHODISM.

“Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts,” Zech. iv, 6.

We are assembled this day, in accordance with the recommendation of the authorities of the Church, simultaneously with our brethren throughout our wide-spread connection, to commemorate a great moral event: an event,

than which few brighter in their aspects, or more extended and powerful in their influences, have ever occurred in the history of religion: it was, the beginning of Methodism—the commencement of that great and gracious reformation, known by that name, and which has now been spreading and prevailing in the world just one hundred years. The river of salvation, that first found a gushing fountain in the open sepulchre of the Savior, and was so mightily swollen and quickened in its full and flowing tide by the profuse outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and has been rolling the augmenting current of its refreshing and healing waters through the world from that time to this, has, perhaps, never received a larger tributary stream. The Sun of righteousness, which has been rising upon the world for more than eighteen hundred years, has never spread over mankind a more healing wing. Methodism, for the last century, has been one of the most efficient instrumentalities employed in the salvation of men; and, if my partialities have not rendered me enthusiastic in my admiration of it, has now become the practical and successful Archimedes of the Church; taking the Bible for its lever, the atonement of Christ for its fulcrum, and the power of the Holy Spirit for its strength, he is actually lifting up the moral world to God. This day is the first centenary point in its history. To-day, like the traveler who has crossed the tiresome plain, and labored up the steep and rugged ascent of the mountain, we stand on a lofty and commanding eminence. The mists of the plain and the fogs of the mountain-side are all below our feet. We bask in clear, unclouded sunshine; and while we feel its vivifying and animating influences, we look back upon all the way the Lord hath led us with adoring gratitude and wonder; we look forward, and we are filled with rapture as the future spreads out before us an illimitable prospect of gathering and brightening glories. In religiously

celebrating this day—in profitably improving this centenary occasion, perhaps we cannot more usefully direct our attention than to a consideration of that agency by which this stupendous event—this marvelous work, has been accomplished. To this exercise our text calls us. The doctrine of the text is evidently this: that the work of the Lord the enterprises of Christianity, are not carried forward by means and measures that ostensibly and of themselves promise success, but by the invisible, yet almighty, Spirit of God. This is a doctrine of great vitality and importance: it ought always to be kept prominent before the eye of the Church. Our convictions on this subject must inevitably characterize very powerfully the dispositions and measures with which we prosecute the work of the Lord. If we feel that we can carry out the great and glorious purposes and objects of religion by powerful instrumentalities and politic operations, we shall be led to adopt them and place our dependence upon them. Hence, then, will arise at once a demand for splendid churches, for florid, rhetorical pulpit ministrations, and for imposing religious ceremonies. The very moment our mistaken views lead us to desire or adopt these, we are shorn of our strength—the glory will depart from us, and our beloved Zion, thus gorgeously caparisoned, will be comparable to a whited sepulchre—beautiful without, but within full of dead men's bones. If, on the contrary, we feel that no instrumentality, however powerful and well adapted, can accomplish any thing in spiritual operations independent of the accompanying powers of the Holy Spirit giving them efficiency and success, we shall be led to adopt those unostentatious measures, and faithfully to employ those simple means which God has ordained, and to seek earnestly and continually that both ourselves and our agencies may be endued with power from on high. This sense of weakness and dependence will lead to the constant exercise of faith and prayer; and every success,

being regarded as the gift of God, will excite to thankfulness and praise. Thus the fires of devotion will be constantly burning—the faith of the Church will always be in lively exercise—the Spirit of God will ever be present and felt—and the power of godliness be uniformly enjoyed. Such a Church will be signally and gloriously prosperous. Her onward career will be one of greater and mightier prevalence and ascendancy—her pervading influence will spread wider and become stronger—her light will shine clearer and clearer, and be seen farther and farther—her priests will be clothed with salvation, and her saints shout aloud for joy; and an observing world will discern that in all her achievements and triumphs the excellency of the power is of God, and not of man. Such being the great practical bearings of this doctrine, how desirable is it that it should be understood and appreciated! And how interesting and important does its discussion become! In endeavoring to present this doctrine to your view as the unequivocal truth of God, we observe that we have a clear illustration of it

IN THE SECOND BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.

It is to this enterprise that our text primarily refers. This work of much labor, expense, and difficulty, was not accomplished by might and power—by human, visible means and measures, that of themselves were adequate to the achievement. Here was no combination of kings, directing their attention, using their authority, and employing their treasures for the furtherance of the enterprise; here were no disciplined armies to protect them from pillage and disturbance from their surrounding jealous and powerful enemies; here were no resources of workmen, material, and moneys commensurate with the undertaking. On the contrary, a small company of exiles, just returned from a distressing captivity, weakened and impoverished, in a time of very general calamity and distress, without

much foreign encouragement, mostly by their voluntary contributions and labors, undertake this stupendous work, evidently feeling that they were called to it by God, and trusting to him for all the ability they might need in the performance of his own required service. And were they mistaken? Does the result prove them to have been deceived and fanatic in their feelings and doings? Far otherwise. Though without might and power, though opposed and delayed, yet, by the Spirit of God, with superhuman ability they prosecuted this noble and pious work to entire completion—a glorious consummation of their anxious and ardent wishes!—and then kept the dedication of this house of God with joy.

It may be interesting and profitable to notice more minutely this invisible spiritual agency in this instance of Christian enterprise. In stating particulars, we observe the Spirit of the Lord inspired his prophets to speak to his people, to enlist their feelings and engage their combined energies and united and determined efforts in rebuilding his temple. “Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them. Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them,” *Ezra* v, 1, 2. Here we see that the Spirit of God gave the very first impulse to the work: it was actually and literally begun by the Spirit. When those in authority, and those associated with them, commenced hostilities against them and sought to prevent their operations, this same Spirit gave them intrepidity and fortitude to persevere, unappalled and unhindered: “At the same time came to them Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and their companions, and said thus unto them, Who hath

commanded to build this house, and to make up this wall? Then said we unto them after this manner, What are the names of the men that make this building? But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius: and then they returned answer by letter concerning this matter," Ezra v, 3-5. Well, what is the result when the affair comes before Darius? Why, this same Spirit inclines his heart to favor the religious undertaking of his Jewish subjects: "For the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel," Ezra vi, 22. Thus we see, that from the beginning to the conclusion of this work, it was supervised and carried forward by the Spirit of God: first inspiring the prophets of the Lord, and then enlisting and sustaining his people; so controlling the counsel and conduct of their enemies as to bring the subject of their anxieties before their sovereign, and then turning his heart to favor their wishes, and to furnish them means to complete their undertaking. Thus, too, is illustrated most strikingly the doctrine, which we have stated as the doctrine of the text, *That the work of the Lord—the enterprises of Christianity, are not carried forward by means and measures that ostensibly and of themselves promise success, but by the invisible, yet almighty Spirit of God.*

Another illustration of this doctrine is found in

THE BUILDING UP OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH—the true spiritual temple, of which the former was but a type.

The Christian Church was set up, and has been maintained, in despite of the most powerful, determined, and vindictive hostility the world has ever witnessed. The same malignant and vengeful hate that clamored for the blood of its blessed Founder, crying out, "Away with him! Crucify him, crucify him! His blood be on us,

and on our children!" raged with terrific violence against his humble followers, venting itself in opposition and persecution, even to disfranchisement, blood, and death. It was death to be a Christian, and yet Christianity lived and flourished. Every martyr served as fuel to increase the burning fire from heaven; so that its flame continued to ascend higher, and extend its light and influence farther, the more it was opposed. It spread and prevailed; and in its aggressive career not only encountered and overcame the hostility of the world's deep and malignant depravity, but, also, the inveterate prejudice of the Jew, and the traditional idolatrous superstition of the Gentile. These different opposing powers did not assault Christianity separately, in an individual character; but, combining their forces, and employing all their united energies of war, they assailed the infant Church of Christ, determined on its extermination, and confident of success. But that kingdom which is not of this world, was not to be overturned by this world. Vain were the leagues of earth and hell, to accomplish its destruction. It stood the shock of furious onset—it triumphed in every fierce conflict—it took captive many of the hosts that battled against it—superior to all foes, it was constantly multiplying its victories, triumphantly going forward conquering and to conquer, and rolling onward and around its resistless tide of glory. But by what power were these wonders wrought? Was the instrumentality of a few devoted individuals—without science, without reputation, without authority, without the patronage of the great—despised, rejected, persecuted—were their abilities and efforts adequate to accomplish such mighty works? Or estimating fully the eloquence of Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas, and the zeal, and devotedness, and enterprise of their coadjutors, were these, in themselves, competent to effect such mighty revolutions, such stupendous wonders? Verily, no—credulity itself answers,

no—common sense and cultivated intellect, both answer, no, and declare it impossible! Christianity evidenced a divine energy, an independent power, within herself, capable of giving her an undying, an ever-increasing momentum. Her weapons were not carnal, visible, politic weapons; they were spiritual, “but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds.” Her men and measures were all “endued with power from on high.” Ministers and private members of the Church all had “an unction from the Holy One.” It was this baptism of the Spirit, this endowment of divine influence, that sustained them in their sufferings, and gave them success in their labors. Their sufficiency, and, by consequence, their mighty triumphs, were of God.

It is not only evident, as we have seen, that this must have been the case from the very nature of things; but it was also distinctly professed. They did not claim to work these wonders themselves, independent of received sufficiency. On the contrary, they constantly affirmed their absolute dependence upon God, and invariably ascribed to him the praise of every work. For example, when Peter and John, on going up into the temple, wrought the miracle of healing upon the lame man who sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple, the people who witnessed the miracle, or saw what had been done, were filled with “wonder and amazement,” “and ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon’s, greatly wondering;” “And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus;” “And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect

soundness in the presence of you all," Acts iii. Equally to the point is the case of Paul's healing a cripple at Lystra. "The people, beholding what was done, lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down unto us in the likeness of men. Then their priests brought oxen and garlands, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which, when the apostles understood, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We, also, are men of like passions with you;" and farther instructed them that this miracle had been wrought by the power of that God who made the heavens and the earth.

Not only did the apostles and primitive Christians ascribe to God the power of working miracles with which they were endued, but also their efficiency in every department of Christian labor. Witness the language of the apostle: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." "So, then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," was their language. They exhorted one another to labor, "as of the ability which God giveth;" and to "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." They prayed for each other to be "strengthened with might by *his Spirit* in the inner man." The position, then, that we have assumed, that the Christian Church was established, and built up, not by might and power, but by the Spirit of God, is fully sustained by the evidence of unequivocal circumstances, and the professions of those employed in this work. Perhaps we may present this fact, not in a clearer and more satisfactory light, but in a more impressive and affecting aspect, by farther observing, that, so far from being promoted and advanced by "might and power," whenever these have been depended

upon to sustain and upbuild the Christian Church, she has uniformly declined in spirituality and saving efficiency, and retrograded in all her interests. We need refer to but one of the numerous instances of this, in the history of the Church, which both illustrate and prove this position. When, in the person of Constantine, Christianity found a royal patron, whose authority was exerted to protect her from persecution; whose example made it fashionable and reputable for the members of his court, and the subjects of his kingdom, to profess themselves Christians; whose treasures were contributed liberally to adorn and render magnificent her sanctuaries; whose influence, direct and indirect, was exerted to enrich and ennoble her ministers: surely, then, upon principles of worldly calculations, we might expect to see Christianity in the perfection of her divine glories, and the splendors of unparalleled triumphs. But was it so? Did regal sunshine thus contribute to her prosperity? It did not. Christianity, in these circumstances, soon became like an exotic in an unnatural soil and an ungenial climate—its flowers faded and fallen, its leaves withered and sear, and its fruit decayed and gone; even its leafless, fruitless branches dying or dead; till at last even the form of pure religion was gone, and other things called by its name, and substituted in its stead. Long, and dark, and dismal was the night of the Church that followed. The Church, in receiving Constantine to her fellowship, received an asp to her bosom, that injected the poison of pride into her heart, from whence it circulated throughout her whole system, until every limb and member felt the chill of death. The “might” and “power” which Constantine professedly and ostensibly employed to strengthen and promote the Church, was like the artificial stimulus of ardent spirits, which many profess to use to give them an increase of strength and vigor; it affords a temporary excitement,

and consequent animation; but, while that is being enjoyed, its hidden fires are consuming all that is vital and excellent in constitution and character; and soon renders them bloated, deformed, and disgusting in their appearance, and palsied, and imbecile in their powers. Though this is, perhaps, the most fatal instance in which the Church has substituted "might and power" for the Spirit of God, as a ground of dependence, yet every instance has proved disastrous. The truth is, the Church can never form an alliance with either civil power or worldly policy, and depend on them for support, without first divorcing herself from her natural and legitimate spouse, and renouncing dependence upon him. All that Christianity requires of the powers of this world is merely toleration. She does not look to them for help, or lean upon them for support. Only give her the world as the field for her operations, and let her employ her own inherent powers unembarassed, she will soon extend her sway over all nations, and fill the earth with her glory.

Christianity is adequate to her own work. In fulfilling her high destinies—in carrying out her magnificent schemes of mercy to man, she uses no instruments but those of her own making, and employs no powers but those of her own inspiring. We must amputate her own divinely adapted and perfectly competent limbs, before we can compel her to hobble with the crutches of "might" and "power." Christianity is as independent as her Author. She can work with human instrumentalities, or without them. She can use earthly powers, or dispense with them. If they oppose her operations, she can work in despite of them: if they league against her, she can overthrow them. And this will she do when God ordains. Exerting her omnipotence, she will overwhelm every opposing power, and extend her dominion "from sea to sea, and from the river unto the

ends of the earth." "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." "Halleluiah; for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth," even now; and let his saints rejoice.

Another equally clear illustration of the doctrine which we have stated as that of the text, is seen in the

HISTORY OF WESLEYAN METHODISM.

Methodism has been a subject of observation and of history for a century. During that period, her every operation has been scanned by the eye of malignant hate and jealous carefulness. Her friends, however, have witnessed her course of constant usefulness, and successive triumph with adoring gratitude and wonder; while the fervency of her love, the meekness of her spirit, and the blamelessness of her action, have been continually softening the opposition of foes, and winning the admiration of observers. Glorious, surpassingly glorious, has been the career she has run; and sublimely elevated the position she has acquired. But all this has been wrought, not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God.

We argue this, first, from the circumstances under which this branch of the Christian Church had its beginnings.

Mr. Wesley, and his early associates in religious pursuits and Christian labors, could not have received their religious views and feelings from any human source, inasmuch as there were in the Church at that period no individuals professing such sentiments, or enjoying such a state of experience. Mr. Wesley's mother, to whom he attributes so much of his character and usefulness, did not, at that time, entertain any of the distinguishing doctrines, or enjoy those peculiar, high attainments in Christian experience, which her sons sought and preached. It was not until some years after, through their ministry, that she

was more fully brought into the enjoyment of these great blessings.

Peter Bohler, from whom Mr. Wesley received much light on the subject of saving faith, did not entertain those enlarged views of Christian holiness for which Mr. Wesley and his associates were distinguished. His teachers taught him the opposite sentiments: his friends generally ridiculed and contemned his religious opinions. There were no "Aquila and Priscilla" to "expound unto him the way of God more perfectly." In the absence, then, of all other teaching on these distinguishing doctrines, Mr. Wesley must have received them from the Holy Spirit. If "flesh and blood" did not reveal them unto him, God must have done so. And as it is only the Spirit that can take of the things of Christ, and show them unto us, it is settled that Mr. Wesley must have owed his peculiar religious views and feelings, and Methodism its origin, to the blessed Spirit. This is equally true of his measures. They were not plans and schemes devised in study, and deliberated upon in council; they all of them arose out of his circumstances, and not from his policy. This is true with regard to the organization of his societies.

"In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to Mr. Wesley, in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired, (as did two or three more the next day,) that he would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come; which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together; which, from thenceforward, they did every week, namely, on *Thursday*, in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them, (for their number increased

daily,) he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them; and they always concluded their meeting with prayer, suited to their several necessities.

“This was the rise of the UNITED SOCIETY, first in *Europe*, and then in *America*. Such a society is no other than ‘*a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.*’ ”

His field preaching resulted from his being excluded the pulpits of the Church. The same cause led to the erection of Methodist chapels. Without these two measures, Methodism never could have prospered, and yet they both were the offspring of necessity, instead of scheming. That most extraordinary, and, perhaps, most important of all his peculiar measures, his employment of lay preachers, was equally providential in its origin. At the time of its first occurrence in his societies, it was very revolting to his feelings. It was not until after a severe conflict with his preconceived views of ecclesiastical order, and the very serious admonition of his revered, discreet, and godly mother, that he consented for them thus to officiate in his connection. The commencement of this practice was as follows: Mr. Wesley, in his absence from London, authorized Mr. Maxfield “to pray with the society, and advise them as might be needful.” His feelings, under the moving influence of the divine Spirit, led him to expound unto them portions of the word of God. On Mr. Wesley’s hearing of this, he hastened back to silence him. Upon this his mother addressed him: “John, you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favoring readily any thing of this kind; but take care what you do with respect to that young man; for he is as surely

called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him, also, yourself." He took this advice, and the result is known and felt by the world to this day. What can be more evident than that this practice was prompted by the Holy Spirit; first impressing the mind of Mr. Maxfield to engage in it; then the mind of Mrs. Wesley to approve it; and then inducing Mr. John Wesley, so much against his inclinations and prepossession, to tolerate it, until convinced of its utility and correctness, and then to adopt it?

The itinerant ministry, also, is a "fruit of the Spirit." The Spirit inspired Mr. Wesley and a few coadjutors with so much of the constraining "love of Christ," that they felt "pressed in Spirit" to go from place to place, "warning every man, and teaching every man." This was done at first without any concerted plan of operations; but as the number of laborers of kindred views and feelings increased, and the greatness of their success became apparent, a necessity for some system of regular and combined action was felt. This necessity led to the adoption of the itinerant system of pastoral labors. How evident is it, then, that all these measures of Mr. Wesley were of God? This is true of those we have omitted to mention; but these are sufficient to illustrate the point before us. His Spirit is the divine parent of them all. Methodism is not the offspring of "might" and "power," but of "my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

We argue the position we have assumed with regard to the Methodist Church, secondly, from the fact that "might" and "power" were arraigned against her, instead of contributing to her advancement.

The reception which Methodism met with when ushered into the world was a very hostile one. Like every other reformation, it was violently opposed. Ecclesiastical and civil laws, if not in principle, at least in administration,

were belligerent. Ministers excluded the Methodists from their pulpits; declaimed against them from the sacred desk; and, both in public and in private, ridiculed and contemned them. Magistrates arraigned them, and sometimes imprisoned them. Those in authority refused to punish such as disturbed and injured them. Mobs were encouraged to insult and stone them. They were waylaid and beaten in their travels—interrupted, endangered, and injured when preaching. Their disturbance of the calm of death that prevailed in the Church and in the world, roused into tremendous and fearful opposition all the vindictive and persecuting powers of Pharisaic and Antinomian bigotry and pride, and all the wild and frenzied powers of anarchy and riot. Furious, reckless, and threatening was the assault; but the little phalanx of reformation received it undaunted, and sustained it unbroken. There was no frightening men “full of the Holy Ghost and of faith:” and there was no conquering men armed with the love of Christ. “Persecuted in one city, they would flee to another,” and repeat the same work of preaching “Jesus and the resurrection.” Assailed, and pelted, and wounded with missiles, they would pray, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;” and in a few hours they would be found in another field, with a multitude around them, to whom they would be preaching the “unsearchable riches of Christ.” While their opposers were exerting themselves to the utmost to extinguish one of their lighted fires; as soon as their maddened zeal would permit them to look around, they would be astounded to see these fires burning stronger and blazing higher in every direction.

The coming in contact of Methodist preachers with the people, was like the collision of flint and steel—fire was uniformly generated; and wherever it fell—on whomsoever it fell, it kindled and burned, and, when ignited, there was no putting it out. If they separated the burning embers,

they burned still, yet remained unconsumed, and very often set on fire those among whom they were placed: so that the scattering of these firebrands only spread the wider and the faster the flame they sought to extinguish. To bury it up under opprobrium and ignominy only gave it a volcanic force, which, in its action, threw off and scattered to the winds all the entire mass, and burst forth with hotter flame and stronger light than ever. Verily, if this reformation had been of men, from such opposition it must have come to naught; but, because it was of God, it could not be overthrown. It is evident, then, that, so far from being effected by "might" and "power," this glorious revival of New Testament religion was the work of the Spirit of God, accomplished when "might" and "power" were in formidable array against it.

A third argument to sustain the position we are laboring to substantiate is drawn from the character of those whose agency or instrumentality was specially concerned in this work.

The Holy Spirit usually works by means; employing some providential occurrence or some human agent as the instrument by which its impressions are made and its operations carried out. In the work we are contemplating, nothing is more evident to a philosophic eye than that the obvious agency employed, independent of extraneous influence, was wholly inadequate to its accomplishment. It is true there were some great men—some master spirits, engaged in this cause; some who would have been eminent in any age and in any department of human enterprise. But they were few; and so humbling and self-sacrificing were the terms of association with Mr. Wesley in his high and heavenly pursuits, that they remained few. It was as true in this revival of Christianity as in its commencement, that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, were called." But in this instance, as in

the former, God "chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God chose the weak things of the world to confound the things which were mighty; and base things of the world, and things which were despised, did God choose, yea, and things which were not, to bring to naught things that were," and to accomplish the things he pleased; "that no flesh should glory in his presence." It has been a constant and very general complaint against the Methodists, that their ministers were illiterate and incompetent. We have no hesitancy in admitting that many of them have not been "wise men after the flesh"—they have not pertained to the *literati* of this world; but as touching their competency, let the results of their labors answer. What ministry, I triumphantly ask, has ever proved so efficient, and wrought so marvelously, in the work of salvation? If the Methodist ministry has been an incompetent one, I affirm it in the face of all the vain pretenders to competency, that the Christian Church has been without a competent ministry since the days of the apostles. Certainly, during the past century, no ministry has exerted so powerful and blessed an influence in the world, and gathered so many souls into the fold of Christ, as the Methodist ministry. And in the eighteen centuries that the "ministry of reconciliation" has been established, in no instance has there been so successful a company of laborers, excepting the apostles and their immediate successors. What is the conclusion? Why, if the Methodist ministry has been the most successful, and that has been incompetent, then, unquestionably, all the others have been still more incompetent. Those, therefore, who judge us, condemn themselves. Our competency was not received from men. It requires something more than a classical and theological training, and a valid ordination, to give men competency as "embassadors for Christ." These are attainments to be desired and prized. When combined

with spiritual qualifications, and held as secondary to them, they are of great service to the minister of Christ; but having these, yet being without the anointing of the Holy Ghost, they are but "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." But with small literary attainments, moved thereto by the Holy Ghost, a man fully imbued with the constraining love of Christ, himself deeply experienced in the things of God, given to prayer, and strong in faith, may labor with astonishing success in winning souls to Christ. Such have been the qualifications of Methodist ministers. Their labors were rendered so signally efficient and useful, not by their "might" and "power," their learning, and eloquence, and popular regard, but by the Spirit of God. We admit the treasure has been in earthen vessels, and rejoice that this proves the excellency of the power to be of God. While God has given to this branch of his Church a sufficient number of learned, pious, and judicious men to watch over her interests, to defend her doctrines and usages, and to control and regulate her operations, he has given her a great number of plain, godly ministers, whose zeal and holiness have rendered them "burning and shining lights," and given unparalleled success to their ministrations. So that, on this centenary occasion, in view of the character of the Methodist ministry, and the great prosperity of the Methodist Church, we are led to exclaim, What hath *God* wrought?

"God all our works in us hath wrought,"

Our good is all divine."

Our fourth argument, to prove that Methodism is the product of the Spirit of God, is adduced from the nature of the work itself.

The connection between cause and effect, which is found to exist in nature and in philosophy, is, if possible, more strikingly apparent in religion. No natural power can produce a spiritual effect. No earthly agency can, by

independent action, produce a religious result. The cause—the power employed, must partake of the nature of the effect sought. The designs of Methodism always have been, and still are, spiritual designs. Her aims are none other than the glory of God in the salvation of men. The work to be wrought, then, is a spiritual, divine work: consequently, the agency employed must be a spiritual, divine agency. The spiritual, divine agency which God employs on earth is that of his Holy Spirit; therefore, inasmuch as Methodism is such a spiritual, divine work, being accomplished, it must have been done by the blessed Spirit. The gracious purposes of Methodism have been carried out to a glorious extent. The founders of the Methodist Church early declared to the world that they believed themselves “*raised up to spread Scriptural holiness.*” It is true, this great object has not been entirely attained. We lament that the holiness of the Bible has not gained a perfect and universal sway in the Christian Church. It is also a cause of humiliation and painful regret, that the entire heathen world has not been told of that fountain which has been opened “for sin and for uncleanness.” But the doctrine of Bible holiness has been faithfully explained and enforced. Its nature, its attainableness, its claims, have been urged upon the attention and consciences of multitudes. Some have not been “disobedient to the heavenly vision.” Many have seen the beauty of holiness, aspired after, and attained it. They have given unequivocal testimony, not only by the profession of their lips, but, also, by the corresponding purity and usefulness of their lives, that they were “sanctified wholly;” that the “blood of Jesus Christ cleansed them from all sin.” Yes, multitudes living, and dying, have been brought to “praise God, when sin,” in them, “was all destroyed;” and a great number are now before the throne, having “washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” At this time, also, there

are many in our communion who are living, not only in the blessed enjoyment of this grace, but, also, in the clear exemplification of it in their characters and conduct; their blameless deportment, their living faith, their prevailing prayers, their fervent spirit, their meekness, gentleness, goodness, rendering them pre-eminently "the light of the world," and "the salt of the earth." At this day, also, there are some thousands of devoted, zealous ministers of Christ, who are holding up to the Church this high spiritual attainment as a blessing they are privileged to enjoy, and urging and exciting them onward in its pursuit. The blessing of the Lord, in a special manner, attends these ministrations, and the work of sanctification is spreading and prevailing among us. Let God be praised!

On this centenary occasion, it is, also, matter of congratulation, and of devout and great rejoicing, that the subject of evangelical holiness is beginning to excite much earnest attention and deep interest in other branches of the Christian Church. Some of their ministers profess to have attained it themselves, and preach it to their people. Private members of their Churches, and members, too, who command the confidence of all who know them, are entering into the enjoyment of the sanctifying grace of God, and professing it, and living it, before their brethren and the world. Some of their periodicals, at least, speak of the subject with carefulness and deference. Treatises on this subject are written and published by prominent and influential ministers of their own communions. These facts prove that the leaven of sanctifying power is spreading, and give us reason to expect that, ere long, the "whole mass" of the Church will be leavened.

Now, how far this state of things in other denominations has been produced by the direct and indirect influences of the Methodist Church, we do not know; neither do we desire to know. We rejoice greatly in the facts

themselves; and believe that, in every instance, whether in the Methodist or in other Churches, whatever instrument may have been employed, the work is emphatically that of the Spirit. No other power could have effected it, because no other power is adapted to such a result. We admit that men may achieve great and splendid revolutions in politics, in philosophy, and even in ethics: the history of the world demonstrates this; but we deny that any human agency, however powerful or complicated, is, of itself, competent to work a spiritual revolution—a revolution in the holiness of the Church. This being essentially a divine work, must have a divine author. It is as unphilosophical as infidel, to ascribe the gracious revival of Scripture holiness which has taken place among the Methodists, and is now spreading among others, to any other power than that of the Spirit of God. Our statement, then, is fully sustained, that the nature of the work involved in the establishment of Methodism proves it to have been wrought by the “Spirit” of “the Lord of hosts.”

Our fifth and concluding argument in support of the position we have assumed, is drawn from the unprecedented successes of Methodism.

Many, and some of them glorious reformations, are recorded in the history of Christianity; but a reformation so spiritual in its nature, and so stupendous in its character, as that of Wesleyan Methodism, the world has never witnessed. It was not merely a revival of evangelical doctrines and apostolical usages: it was more; it was a revival of the Spirit and power of godliness. It was the re-establishment of the “faith once delivered to the saints;” that faith “which works by love and purifies the heart.” It was the kindling afresh those fervent devotions which burned in martyr bosoms. It was the restoration of that “holy living and dying” which rendered the first age of Christianity so resplendent with hallowed glory. It

was the restoration of that simplicity in religion, both in its ministrations and requirements, which is its crowning—its divinest excellence. O, how blessed is such a work of God! The revival, on an enlarged scale, of the scenes of the transfiguration! When Christ is seen in his divine perfections, not in a solitary place on the dark mountain, by only three favored individuals from among his disciples; when two others from the heavenly world appear to converse with him about his decease, which he has yet to accomplish at Jerusalem: but when the once-crucified “Man of sorrows,” the once-slaughtered “Lamb of God,” is set forth before the world in the full glories of a risen and exalted Savior, in whom “all fullness dwells.” When the “bright cloud” overshadows the whole Zion of God, and when believing multitudes *enter into* that cloud, are filled with its divine beatitude, and with rapturous transport exclaim, “It is good for us to be here.” A repetition of the glories of Pentecost: when the ministers of Christ received “tongues like as of fire;” when ministers and lay believers “were all filled with the Holy Ghost;” when, under the preaching of the Gospel, multitudes were “pricked in their hearts,” and cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?” and when thousands were added unto the Church. This spiritual, saving work of grace, has been wide-spread and powerful: it soon extended its influence over the united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; all classes of persons felt, in a greater or less degree, its heavenly influence, and thousands blessed its sacred sway.

In a very few years after its commencement in England, its wings of love were sufficiently fledged to bear it across the wide Atlantic: it lighted down in this new world, where the unfelled forest of error threw its shades of moral darkness and of spiritual death over many of the inhabitants. Like the herald of the incarnation, it brought “good

tidings of great joy" "to *all* people;" it proclaimed to sinners, Jesus, "full of grace and truth;" his merits free for all, and availing for all. It unsealed to believers the fountain of holiness, and invited them to "wash and be clean." This work of grace, which was thus commenced in this then infant nation, has "grown with its growth, and strengthened with its strength." As the tide of civilization has rolled westward, the first wave of emigration has scarcely broken upon any hill-side, or forest barrier, before it has been succeeded by the wave of Methodism, bearing on its bosom the ark of safety. The consequence is, that it has distributed in rich profusion its sacred blessings throughout the length and breadth of this vast empire; and hundreds of thousands in this land, on this memorable day, are devoutly blessing God for its soul-saving benefits: so that from her thousands of consecrated altars, grateful incense is at this hour ascending to heaven. Far in the wilderness its fires are now burning, and its light shining, to warm, and direct, and save, the red man. Many an Indian heart is glowing with its love, and many an Indian cabin is vocal with its praises.

Upon the moral condition of Africa, which has long been darker than the color of her degraded inhabitants, her illuminating beams are falling. Far along her slave-cursed coast her Gospel lamps are lighted; and their commingling irradiations are penetrating her dense darkness, and her ignorance and idolatry are receding before the light they are pouring upon them. In Africa, Pagan kings and heathen subjects are brought to the knowledge of "the truth as it is in Jesus," and made the happy recipients of divine salvation. Indeed, every continent, and all the more important islands of the sea, have, to a greater or less extent, received of her spiritual bounties, and devoutly acknowledge their obligations for her divine munificence. So extended and powerful has been the influence of

Methodism, that at this interesting epoch in her history, probably millions in heaven, and millions on earth, in jubilant strains, are magnifying the name of God, for the blessings of glory and of grace which they have received from him through her instrumentality.

The success of Methodism has, also, been permanent and increasing. Though a hundred years of age, she at this day possesses all the vivacity and vigor of youth. Her ardor and strength have all the freshness of religious zeal just kindled at the altar of God. Her aims rise higher, and become holier, the longer they are cherished. The more she accomplishes, the more she is prepared to undertake. Her exertions do not exhaust her abilities. In the work of mercy she goes on "from strength to strength." At no former period have her enterprises been so magnificent, her operations so successful, and her prospects so illimitably glorious, as at this moment. On this centenary year she is greatly multiplying her ministers and missionaries, her literary institutions and benevolent associations—she is building her mission houses, and purchasing her mission ships—she is putting on strength, and enlarging her capacities for still mightier and more triumphant action in a world's salvation.

But what is the history and present bearing of the many political and philosophical revolutions which men have engaged in during the last hundred years? Are they still going on in their revolutionary action with increasing momentum? Are they, any of them, extending their influence over the continents of the earth and over the islands of the sea? No, indeed! In the political world, revolution has met revolution, and, in the fury of the conflict, both have lost their strength and their being. In philosophy, theories have been started, and sects have been formed, and flourished; but a single writer has arisen in opposition, and with the touch of his pen has exploded

the system, and annihilated the sect. The most of these human revolutions are known only in history, and the most permanent and successful of them are limited in their bearings to a single state or kingdom, and all careful observers will discern, even in these, the elements of their own decay; while Methodism is as fresh in her beauties, mightier in her energies, and more stupendous and glorious in her bearings and prospects than ever. What is the inference? The natural and only legitimate conclusion is, that Methodism is of God, and not of man: settling fully, and for ever, the doctrine of the text, that it is not established and built up “by might and by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.”

From this subject we make the following inferences:

FIRST: *The glory belongs to God.* If Methodism be the work of God—if all her graces, and her powers, and her successes, have been received from God—then to *him* all the praise is due. This sentiment does not conflict in the least with the instructions of the New Testament, to “render” “honor to whom honor” is “due.” It does not derogate from the just renown of a surgeon who has skillfully performed some important, delicate, and dangerous operation in surgery, to say his instruments were good; especially if he invented and prepared the instruments himself. The ingenuity and skill displayed in devising and preparing appropriate instruments entitle him to as high commendation and as distinguished fame as the successful employment of them. It is not giving the glory of God “to another,” then, to say that in the work of Methodism good instruments have been used; seeing these instruments were all designed and prepared by the great Head of the Church himself. When, then, we speak of Wesley and his compeers as men and ministers of extraordinary powers and usefulness, we only speak of them as instruments of uncommon perfection: and when we speak of their astonishing

achievements, the wonderful results of their labors, we only speak of the successful manner in which God has employed these excellent instruments. The glory redounds to God. And in no view of this whole subject does the glory of God shine forth more resplendent than in his having, in the preparation of these instruments, adapted them to every part of the great operation of Methodism upon the human soul. Among them are instruments to dissect the parts and lay open the seat of the disease; others to probe the morbid part, and exhibit the depth and extent of the alarming malady; others to take up the dis-severed arteries, and stanch the flowing blood; and others still, to bind up the wound, applying skillfully the balm of Gilead, and thus restore the patient to "perfect soundness."

It is very remarkable, that in all this adapting of instruments to different parts of the work to be performed, there is nothing complicated and subtil; no great combination of powers and principles; all is simple. Most of them were merely men filled with the Holy Ghost and with faith. The praise of an instrument is the praise of its author. God is the author of the instruments of Methodism, therefore, their praise is the praise of God. In speaking of the excellencies and special qualifications, then, of the principal laborers in the work of Methodism, we only magnify the abundance of grace and gifts which God bestowed upon them.

Again: to say an instrument performed well, is but to say that a good instrument was dexterously used: the praise of the operation still belongs to the operator. In the operations of Methodism God is the operator; therefore, the success and glory of the operations are ascribable to him alone. We praise men as the instruments: we praise God as the author of those instruments, and as the operator who, with them, has performed such wonders of salvation. We, therefore, give all the praise to God: yes, *all* the praise

belongs to God. Ours, O God, are “the boundless bliss,” and the infinite benefits; thine be all the glory, ascribed of us, and all in earth or heaven, *now*, and *for ever*.

SECOND: *Our dependence in the future must be upon God.* We see that men, at best, are but instruments in spiritual enterprises; we can regard them in no higher light. In the chapter out of which our text is taken, the Jewish Church is called a *candlestick* merely. In Rev. i, 20, the Christian Church receives the same designation. John the Baptist was but the *voice*—only the *voice*—of one crying in the wilderness. Paul was but a planter, and Apollos but a waterer, in the vineyard of the Lord. It will not do to depend upon instruments merely: “So, then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God, that giveth the increase.” I fully believe that no Church has better instrumentalities than the Methodist Church: her self-sacrificing, orthodox, *itinerant* ministry—her well-regulated, efficient Sabbath schools—her flourishing literary institutions—her enlarged missionary operations: but she cannot with safety rely upon any or all of them. For the Church to depend upon her instrumentalities would be neither wiser nor better than for the mechanic to depend upon the tools of his shop to contrive and construct the complicated and wonderful machinery used in great manufacturing operations. But the dependence of the Church goes farther than this: she must look to God for her instrumentalities, as well as for success in their operations. She cannot make her ministers herself: she must depend on God to call men to, and qualify them for the holy ministry, as he has done in all her past history. Her Sabbath schools will be nurseries of piety only so long as their teachers are baptized into the Spirit of Christ, and the converting power of God is bestowed upon the pupils. Her literary institutions will continue to sanctify as well as impart knowledge, only while those directing them are, in

the fullest sense, "*men of God*;" and while, in answer to the prayers of the Church, the Holy Spirit abides in them. To cast off her dependence upon God is to throw away her hopes: the very moment the Methodist Church looks to "might" and "power" for prosperity, she commits suicide. DEATH!—unnatural DEATH—ignominious DEATH—will overtake her in the error of so doing. It is in God that Methodism has her being: none but God can preserve her life, and endue her with power. In God she is clothed with his own attributes; her love, her holiness, her power, her entire nature, are divine. Out of God she is but a human scheme, impotent as an arm of flesh. If she has revivals, they must be wrought by the Holy Ghost; if she has undying fires burning upon her altars, they must come down from heaven; if her consecrated millions are clothed with the *power of godliness* and the *beauty of holiness*, she must "cleave unto the Lord." O, had I the power, I would this day write upon each of her flying banners—upon every pillar in her thousands of temples—over all her consecrated pulpits—in letters of living light, the motto of our text: "NOT BY MIGHT, NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS."

THIRD: *The connection between human instrumentality and divine agency in the promotion of Christianity.* We think we have established the position we assumed as the doctrine of the text—*That the work of the Lord—the enterprises of Christianity, are not carried forward by means and measures that ostensibly and of themselves promise success, but by the invisible yet almighty Spirit of God.* Still, they are not carried on without means—without appropriate means. Christianity was not established in the world without human instrumentality. Even the remarkable occurrences of the day of Pentecost were not independent of the prayers of the Church and the ministrations of the apostles. In the establishment and

prevalence of Methodism, what vast expenditures of labor and money, and even of life, have been required! How many of her sons have given themselves to traveling and preaching; to visiting from house to house, to instruction, to admonition, to exhortation, to prayer and fasting, to Christian effort in every possible manner, day and night, summer and winter!

The Methodists of the past century have certainly been the "*working class*" in the Christian Church. The labor performed by ministers and members has been immense. The building of her chapels, the support of her ministers, the endowment of her seminaries of learning, the sending out and sustaining her missionaries, though all done upon the most rigid principles of economy, have not been done without expense. In promoting this great and good cause, how many, in their devotedness, have not only given labor and money, but, also, life! By their incessant toil, their frequent exposures, their many cares, their great anxieties, their constantly taxed sympathies, how many have brought upon themselves a martyr death! On this day of joy and of praise, the sun that has risen upon us with so much beauty and effulgence shines upon the premature graves of hundreds who have sacrificed *themselves*, in the service of God, upon the altar of the ministry.

In reference to the work of God, the experience of the past will be the experience of the future. It is as true now as it was when first spoken by the Savior to his disciples, "without me ye can do nothing." It is as true now as it was when Paul wrote it, "through Christ strengthening them, they can do all things." God always has, and always will, privilege his ministers and people to be "workers together with him" in saving sinners. His condescension, in permitting his children to co-operate with him in his plans and works of mercy and of love, is so *infinite*, and the reward he has promised to fidelity and

devotedness in these sacred services so *immense*, so *exceedingly glorious*, they cannot refuse to enlist all their energies, and employ all their talents, in this gracious work, in such manner as his providence and Spirit may direct, without being guilty of enormous sin. God is independent of his people—he can employ other agencies, or work without any—but he has laid them under the most solemn and sacred obligations to serve him. Drawing our proof from his past dispensations, we say to the Methodist Church, that if she prove recreant to her important trust—if she fail to fulfill the end for which she was raised up, “to spread Scriptural holiness over the land,” and over the world—God will give her stewardship to another. He will raise up a people who will perform his gracious pleasure, and receive the glorious reward.

But he has called us to this work. As our fathers believed, so we believe: I trust, as they felt, so we feel. And, O, I hope that as they labored, so we shall labor. May the zeal and simplicity, the faith and efficiency, which characterized her early ministers, distinguish her ministers to the end of time. May the holiness, the prayerfulness, the watchfulness, the plainness and usefulness which marked the primitive members of her communion, ever render them a peculiar people, until, by the grace of God, all men are conformed to the same image. As numbers, and wealth, and learning, increase in the Church, may they all be sanctified and employed for the attainment of the great end desired—the holiness of the world.

Brethren, our zeal, and faith, and efforts, must not decline. O, let us strive together that our love may abound more and more; that our labors may be even more abundant and successful; and that the Church may be much more glorious in her future, than in her past history. If we are instruments in promoting the great

interests of the Church, we must be voluntary instruments. God will not employ us arbitrarily; he will not compel us to serve him. But is there not inducement enough—is there not sufficient motive to influence every one to say, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God?* O, let us yield to the constraining love of Christ, let us covet the luxury of doing good; let us consecrate ourselves, our time, our influence, our means, all cheerful, voluntary offerings to God. Let us be ambitious to glorify God in our bodies and spirits, which are God's; let us not live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us. With this devotedness of her members, the Church will rise in every spiritual attainment, and soon spread her benign influence and saving blessings to the ends of the earth. Then will she fulfill her sublime destinies—then will she bless earth and people heaven—then will she retain the favor of God and the admiration of men—then, through all time, will her priests be clothed with salvation, and her saints shout aloud for joy. O Lord! our dependence is upon thee, and our eyes are up to thee; let thy salvation be upon us, and upon thy Sion, for ever. Amen.

SERMON VI.

BY REV JAMES QUINN.

THE NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL MAN.

“The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they, also, that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they, also, that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall, also, bear the image of the heavenly,” 1 Cor. xv, 47–49.

THE science of salvation, of all others, is of the greatest importance to the human race. Inspired men, for many ages, made inquiry of the Spirit of Christ, which

was in them, when it testified before the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, if by any means they might ascertain and set forth the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of the *system of grace*, which provides salvation for, and offers salvation to Adam's apostate, ruined family. Angels, too, those pure, unfallen spirits, who kept their first estate, are represented by St. Peter as desiring to look into these things, as if to grasp the *mysterious cause* of dying love. But after all their inquiries and researches, may they not, with one wondering and adoring apostle, exclaim, "O the depth!" and with another, "Behold what manner of love!" and leave the story to be told by the redeemed and saved of every age and nation, when they shall appear before the throne, having their garments washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb? *Christ and him crucified—giving himself for us—suffering for us, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God*—was the constant theme of the great apostle; and this theme he constantly gloried in. He exhibited Christ living, dying, rising, ascending, interceding for us, and reigning until death is swallowed up in victory, and the last enemy destroyed. But he dwelt with great interest upon the rising again of Christ from the dead: "For if," saith he, "Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith, also, is vain;" "ye are yet in your sins," unredeemed, unpardoned, unsanctified; "and we are found false witnesses of God." Then, placing himself on this platform, he takes up the subject of the resurrection, argumentatively, and proves, beyond all reasonable doubt, the doctrine of a general resurrection of the human race, both of the just and of the unjust, asserting that, "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" but "every man in his own order." *Mark this well.* For after death, and the resurrection, cometh the judgment, when all must appear before the

judgment-seat of Christ, to receive for the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad.

In the course of his argument on the important subject set forth in this chapter, the apostle brings two extraordinary personages into view, calls them both by the same name, "Adam," and gives to each the appellation of "man." Each is placed at the head of the human race. The first as progenitor and federal head. Of him he saith that he is of the "earth, earthy," "made a living soul." Of the second man he asserts, although a man, yet that he was "the Lord from heaven"—"a quickening Spirit," and, therefore, "heavenly;" and he stands at the head of Adam's race, as the great Mediator and surety of a better testament. Having thus introduced the subject, we proceed in the following order :

I. TO TAKE A VIEW OF THE FIRST MAN, AND HIS RACE AS CONNECTED WITH HIM.

II. TO TAKE A SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF THE SECOND ADAM, AND OF THE HUMAN FAMILY AS REPRESENTED BY HIM AND INTERESTED IN HIM.

III. SOME APPLICATION, WITH A FEW CLOSING REMARKS; and I claim your sympathies, and ask your attention and prayers.

Of the first man, the apostle asserts that he was "of the earth, earthy," "made a living soul." Here both parts of human nature are set forth. God who formed all things by the word of his power, formed the human body of the dust of the earth. This is the inferior—the material—the corporeal part of our nature. The Psalmist speaks of man as being "fearfully and wonderfully made." Truly, truly, it is a well-wrought frame; an organization without defect—a workmanship worthy of God. Let men, then, learn to possess their vessels (bodies) in sanctification and honor; for if any man defile the temple of God, (the body,) him shall God destroy. This may be done by drunkenness,

gluttony, debauchery, excessive or unlawful indulgence of any animal appetite or propensity.

But there is a spirit in man: for, "God breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living soul." This is the superior part of human nature. The proofs of the *immateriality* and *immortality* of the soul, and its intellectual and conscious existence in the separate state, are abundant; but, for the sake of brevity, we pass them by, leaving the intelligent hearer to collect and arrange them for himself. The soul is the seat of science and volition; and, therefore, man (as he was in paradisiacal purity, and as he is under the provisions of the new covenant) is a proper subject of law, and by the law under which he is placed is held responsible to the Lawgiver; for he is capable both of knowing the obligations of the law, and complying with its requisitions. But, alas, for Adam and the human race, our great progenitor and federal head became a transgressor, and fell under the malediction of the law of that covenant in which he stood fair in the image of Him that created him—losing that image, and forfeiting all that was secured to him and his posterity, as an obedient subject of the government of God. By him sin entered into the world, and death by sin—by his transgression many were made sinners—by his disobedience judgment came upon all men to condemnation. We see, then, that Adam's posterity were involved with him in the transgression, and subjected with him to the penal sanctions of the law. For "*by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*" But we may profitably trace our connection with the first Adam.

1. We have recognized him as standing at the head of our race, as the great progenitor and federal head, in a covenant relation involving the interest of all his descendants. From him, in the order of nature as established by

God, we have received our being—our entire nature, and received it as it is. I once doubted this, thinking that the soul came immediately from God by infusion; but, forty-six years ago, I was convinced of my error by Fletcher's Appeal. As "all nations are made of one blood, have the same nature, from the same source, it follows that human nature, as such, is alike—is the *same*, in every age—in every clime. No one doubts this, who is engaged in sending or conveying the news of salvation to distant barbarous climes." Well, then, we have received our common nature from the first man; and as he was in his fallen, lapsed state, so are we. We bear his image. We are like him in a *moral*, *mental*, and *physical* point of view.

2. The nature which we have received from him is deeply and sinfully depraved. This sinful, dire depravity is well and strongly expressed by our Church in her seventh article of religion. It is there defined to be "the corruption of the *nature* of *every man* that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually." This description of human nature as it is, and as we have received it by nature through generation, is so full and perfect that it needs no explanatory comment. This (as the doctrine of sinful depravity) is held, also, in the same words by the Church of England, and the Protestant Episcopal Church of America.

3. From Adam we inherit trouble and sorrow: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and is full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth, also, as a shadow, and continueth not." How emphatic—how full—how true to the life, is this description of man as he is, and as he always has been! It cannot be added to, nor may we take from it: it is perfect, and every man knows it to be true.

4. As the descendants of fallen Adam, how ignorant are

we! How little of God, or the things of the *Spirit* of God, do we know! "The natural man (man as he is by nature) receiveth not the things of the *Spirit* of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot know them;" and wherefore? "because they are spiritually discerned." Unassisted reason, with the aids of human learning, cannot so illuminate and expand the human mind as to enable the natural man to see, and, understandingly, receive the things of the *Spirit*. Verily, "the world by wisdom knew not God." Look at Egypt, Rome, and polished Greece. Could either of them—could all of them together, give a satisfactory answer to the plain question, How many gods are there? or inform man what he must do to be saved?

It would illy become one who has suffered so much inconvenience from the want of learning, to utter a word against it. All we mean to say is, that it never did, and never can so change the nature of men, as to make them Christians, in the proper sense, or qualify them to minister in holy things. So that, if we would attain to the knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus, whom he hath sent, we must have something that has not come from Adam by nature, through generation; for natural ability never can meet moral requirements.

5. As the offspring of Adam, we are under the sentence of death. And what is death, but the penal forfeiture of life? *By man* (Adam) came death. If it be a debt, it is a debt of forfeiture, "and due," as Fletcher remarks, "not to nature, but to stern, unyielding justice." We enter the journey of life under the sentence of death, and the whole journey stretches along the "valley of the shadow of death," while on either hand, before and behind, dusky shades appear. Some of the antediluvians had a long journey through this gloomy vale; but thousands of years have rolled away since the record was made, "And all the

days of Methuselah were nine hundred, sixty and nine years, and he died."

Well, then, we come again to the conclusion, that we have the image of the earthy—that as Adam was, so are we. Here all is gloom; and if no further discoveries had been made, or could be obtained, respecting the character and final destination of man, we should sink down into dark despondency, and, with the poor, bewildered infidel, wish that we never had been born; but, thanks be to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, the star in the east appears, and the Sun of righteousness ariseth with healing in his wings.

II. We now take up our second proposition: to take a view of the second man, &c.

And here we see Jesus, the God-man, of whom the apostle asserts that he was "a quickening Spirit," "the Lord from heaven," and, therefore, not "earthy," but "heavenly." In him we see the two distinct natures united—the divine and human. To my mind it is clear, according to Scripture, that Christ had real existence and personal glory with the Father of lights before the world was; that he was one in essence with Him who is "from everlasting to everlasting." He is, therefore, "the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person," "for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." We might produce many more Scripture proofs of the proper divinity of Christ, but let these suffice.

We have said that Christ is God, truly and properly so. But is he man, also? Yea, verily, he is man, truly and properly man; but not in the ordinary course of nature; for human nature, *entire*, as assumed by him, in order to become our kinsman and surety, was conceived of the *Holy Ghost*; and a pure virgin (a princess of the blood royal) became the mother of this son—this child, whose name is, "*Wonderful, The Mighty God*;" and this

wonderful personage stands at the head of our ruined race, as the great *mediatorial* representative—the surety of a better testament—the *repairer* of the breach—the *restorer* of paths to dwell in. The periods of promises and prophecies, of types and shadows, had passed, and the fullness of the time, the period of consummation, had come, and “God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.” Christ having come forth from the Father, and come into the world, (by incarnation,) addresseth himself to the great work which his Father gave him to do, saying, in the language of submissive obedience, “A body hast thou prepared me: lo! I come to do thy will.” And this is his language as the second man. The great Mediator was (in his incarnation) made under the law, that he might magnify and make it honorable; and, by so doing, redeem those that were under the law. We think that it was the law of the first covenant under which the second Adam (Christ) was made; for that was the law under which the penalty had been incurred—under which mankind were held in a state of condemnation. It was by the transgression of that law (by one) that judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so, by the perfectly sinless obedience (of one) the free gift came, or cometh, upon all men, to justification. Christ knew no sin; he was holy, harmless, and undefiled, and, therefore, his obedience was perfect; and this obedience rendered for man by the great Mediator and surety, was such as God, the Father, approved. Hence the voice from heaven, “This is my beloved Son, *in* whom I am well pleased”—shall we say, with you? So a great and good man used to say; and, surely, if God is ever well pleased with man, it is in and through his Son; and, therefore, he saith, “Hear ye him.” But in all this great transaction, the claims of justice are never lost sight of. Hence, sufferings and death were a part, and an important part, of the obedience which he

performed as Mediator: "He became *obedient* unto *death*, even the death of the *cross*." For four thousand years Christ had been set forth in *promises*, prophecies, types, and shadows; in which divinity and humanity, both united in the same person, often appear in the character and work of the promised Messiah, while the "Spirit of Christ," in the prophets, "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

Christ explains this whole matter to his disciples after his resurrection. Having "opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures," he said, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead;" and again, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" St. Paul testified both to small and great only what "the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead;" and that "it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering;" and sums up the whole of the sacrificial code, and the design of Christ's sufferings and death, in Hebrew xiii, 11, 12: "For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burnt without the camp. Wherefore, Jesus, also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood suffered without the gate;" so that we may safely conclude, that the last great act of obedience on the part of the great Redeemer was, that of giving himself an offering and sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savor.

Do we inquire what perfection in God—what principle in the divine government required all this in order to human redemption and salvation? We answer, *Justice*, stern, unyielding justice; for Christ being now set forth a propitiatory sacrifice for sins that are past, "God can be

just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Christ," and receive into divine favor all that come to God by him.

And now let a world of sinners lost in Adam, but redeemed by Christ, come and behold the wonders of redemption: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." God is well pleased in him, and, through him, looks with complacency on man. But what wonders are here! It *pleased* the Lord to bruise and put that Son to grief—to make his soul an offering for sin—to wound him for our transgressions—to bruise him for our iniquity—to lay the *chastisement* of our *peace* upon him, that we might be healed by his *stripes*! And, O, the lovely Jesus!—the meek, the lamb-like Son of God! He endures contradiction of sinners against himself—he gives his "back to the smiters," and his "cheeks to them that plucked off the hair"—he hides not his "face from shame and spitting." Finally: "he is led as a sheep to the slaughter, and, like a lamb, dumb before his shearer, so he opens not his mouth." "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" And having drunk the cup, he exclaims, "IT IS FINISHED, and gives up the ghost." The law is made honorable—justice is satisfied, and man redeemed from the curse of the law, Christ having been made a curse for him:

"Here the whole Deity is known,
Nor dares a creature guess,
Which of the glories brightest shone,
The justice or the grace."

But it may be asked, "Did Christ, as the great Mediator, by the obedience which he performed and the vicarious, sacrificial death which he died, place *all men* under the

new covenant provisions, so as to place salvation before them, and put it in their reach?" We answer, unequivocally and unhesitatingly, He did. For if "by the *offense* of one, judgment came upon *all* men" under the first covenant, "*even so*, by the *righteousness* of one, the *free gift* came upon *all* men," under the second covenant. And let it not be forgotten, that it was by the grace of God that Christ "tasted death for *every man*"—that he "gave himself a ransom for *all*." Hence we safely assert, that the grace of God that "bringeth salvation to *all* men hath appeared." O, then, let no son of Adam reject, or receive this grace in vain; for it bringeth salvation.

Here is a system of grace, and grace beforehand with human ability, or exertion. "It *preventeth* man that he may have a good will, and worketh with him when he hath that will." So that it is by grace that man hath power to comply with the terms of salvation, or reject the counsel of God against himself. The grace of God by Christ Jesus, reaches down and takes hold of man in his low estate of *mental*, *moral*, and *physical* degradation, in order to raise him up, *illuminate*, *pardon*, *purify*, and reinstate him in the favor and image of God, which he lost in Adam, and from which he had become further removed by actual transgression. We allow, indeed, that "there is a spirit in man," which, doubtless, implies a capacity to receive, but yet it is the "inspiration of the Almighty that giveth them understanding." This inspiration is *illuminating*, *quickening* or life-giving, and *purifying*, and comes from God, through Christ, by the Holy Ghost; a measure of which is given to every man to profit withal. And thus

"Jesus, in whom the Godhead's rays
Beam forth in mildest majesty,"

becomes the light of the world, and the life of men. And so John the Baptist bears witness of him, that all men through him might believe. Faith, then, by which the

testimony which God hath given of his Son is cordially received—faith, apprehending and receiving Christ, and God as he was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, is the condition of justification and salvation under the new covenant. Let the sinner, then, come to Christ, with a broken spirit and a contrite heart, confessing and forsaking his sins, and claiming an interest in the matchless merit of a Savior's dying love, and he shall be justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Justification implies the pardon of sins that are past—removes personal guilt—puts the pardoned sinner in a state of reconciliation with God. He now has peace with God, and is delivered from the spirit of bondage unto fear. In this grace he stands and rejoices in hope of the glory of God. But the grace imparted and received, in justification, must be improved by faith—*working* faith; for faith that works not by love, purifying the heart, is dead—is good for nothing. For as Dr. Watts saith,

“Faith must obey the Father's will,
As well as trust his grace.”

Be it known, then, that those who have received the grace of God in justification, being quickened into spiritual life, are required to improve that grace, and advance in the same, by adding to “faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.”

Thus sanctification commences in *illumination* and *justification*, and goes on in the soul in proportion as the believer grows in grace; for it is a gradual, progressive work of the Spirit and grace of God: “First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” The babe becomes a young man—the young man a father; the deposited leaven spreads, or is diffused through the whole lump; the roots of bitterness are all extracted; and thus

improving the grace of God, and growing therein, we put off the old man and put on the new man; for while by faith we behold as in a glass the glory of God, we are changed into the same image, and become new creatures in Christ Jesus.

And now what is wanting but the Spirit—the Holy Ghost, witnessing to the work, and affixing the seal? When all the graces of the Spirit appear—as love, peace, joy—this witness of the Spirit is, for the most part, direct and instantaneous, and is received by faith; for, saith the apostle, “After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.” While the soul is waiting, looking, longing, breathing after God, and all the mind that was in Christ, the Spirit takes some “*exceeding great and precious promise*,” and applies it to the hungering and thirsting soul, saying, “According to thy faith, so be it unto thee.” The anxious soul replies, “Behold thy servant: be it unto me even as thou sayest.” The Spirit says, “This is thine.” Faith says, “It is mine,” and gives all the glory to God. “Now He is mine, and I am his.”

So the old Methodist divines believed and taught that sanctification was both *gradual* and *instantaneous*—gradual in its rise, progress, and developments; and instantaneous in its consummation, witness, and seal. One of the most profound divines I ever knew, according to years, Rev. Samuel Parker, used to say, that “the grace of God by Christ *preventing* us, and *working* with us, if duly *improved* by us, in the exercise of obedient *faith*, could not fail to gain a complete ascendancy, so that where sin hath abounded grace shall much more abound.”*

* Of dear Parker, permit me to say, that he was a most amiable and interesting youth. We were boys together, and both began to study divinity together in an old-fashioned Methodist Sunday school, near sixty years ago, with the Testament and a Scriptural Catechism

But the body, too, as it has borne the image of the earthy, shall, also, bear the image of the heavenly—shall bear the image of Christ, in his glorified humanity; for Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven; and there, in glorified humanity, he appears; and in that nature and form, no doubt, he will be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels. Christ, as exalted to the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and glorified in human nature, hath all power in heaven and earth; is the source of spiritual life, and has power to impart, or restore, natural life, reorganize the human body, and reunite matter and spirit, soul and body, after having been long separated by death. All this he has done. Having power over all flesh, he rose from the dead to die no more, and so became the first fruits of them that slept. Rejoice in this, O Christian; for "if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall, also, quicken your *mortal* body, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." The saints are dear to Christ. Is he the *head*? They are the *members* of his body. Is he the *vine*? They are *branches* in him. Does he live? They shall live, also; for their life is hid with Christ in God. In death, they but sleep in him. And when he shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, he will bring them with him, change their vile body, and fashion it like his glorious body. "Then will he be glorified in his saints,

before us. We became men, preachers, presiding elders, and delegates to General conference together. We labored, suffered, and sympathized with each other, in the western wilds, more than forty years ago. Ah! I loved him much. But more than twenty years are gone since the Master called him hence; while I am still here, with the mere shreds of my former self.

and admired by all them that believe." But we feel as if forbidden to pursue this subject further, being almost struck blind by the outbeaming of glory. Verily, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but *we know* that when he shall appear, we shall be *like him*, for we shall see him *as he is*." Thus far saith Revelation: says faith, "It is enough." Here we cast anchor, and wait for the daylight of eternity. But we must now draw the subject to a close.

Beloved brethren, I may have delivered to you my last message; for "time is shaking me by the hand," and death is near. In view of this solemn and sublime subject, let saints rejoice and sinners tremble. The time will come "when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth: they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." Only the saints shall participate in the glories of the world of light and immortality. Those, and those only, who follow him in the regeneration shall walk with him in white; but "indignation and wrath upon every soul of man that doeth evil," remaining in unbelief and impenitence. And, O Christian people, remember you are called to be saints; that is, *holy ones*. He that hath called you is holy; so be ye holy in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hastening to, the coming of the Lord. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

SERMON VII.

BY REV. ELMORE YOCUM.

PERFECT LOVE.

"Perfect love casteth out fear," 1 John iv, 18.

IN the whole range of doctrines taught in the Bible, none is more clearly expressed, or stamped with greater

importance, than "*holiness*;" that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." It is taught under a variety of terms, as "perfection," "sanctification," "purity of heart," "assurance of faith," "perfect love," &c. Love is the crowning grace, and a perfection of this grace is the highest glory of Christianity. A subject of greater interest, and more general importance than this, could not be presented, and in its discussion we will notice,

I. THE NATURE OF PERFECT LOVE.

Some set the mark too low, and suppose they enjoy this blessing when first justified; or that it consists in ecstasy of feeling. Others set the mark too high, and discourage themselves and others from seeking it. The true standard is laid down by the apostle in the words of the text, *perfect love*; not perfect obedience to the law of works; not even perfect *legal* obedience to the moral law; not perfect knowledge; but perfect conformity to the evangelical law of the Gospel, which is *love*. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." It would be very difficult for us to show, how many *weaknesses*, *infirmities*, and *errors*, are consistent with perfect love; and even love is not perfect *absolutely*, or in a sense that it does not admit of increase. Certainly there is no point in love to God, however exalted in time, or eternity, beyond which the Christian may not pass. All orthodox Churches admit the doctrine of *total* depravity, and yet teach that the totally depraved may be advancing in iniquity; and may we not, with equal propriety, teach that the wholly sanctified may be constantly growing in the knowledge and love of God. And, as a man of wealth is capable of accumulating property much more easily and abundantly than a poor man, so the sanctified Christian may advance with less difficulty and greater strength in the acquisition of heavenly treasure, because his facilities for growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ are vastly increased.

In what sense, then, may *love* be said to be *perfect*? Simply in this, that it is now the *reigning* and *ruling* principle of the soul, and “casteth out” every opposing principle. “Perfect love casteth out fear”—all tormenting fear, as, 1. The fear of reproach. 2. Fear of want. 3. Fear of death. 4. Fear, or dread of judgment. It will be perceived that this is a very happy state of mind. Free from all anxiety and care, the soul rests calmly in God.

“O that I now the rest might know,
Believe and enter in;
Now, Savior, now, the power bestow,
And let me cease from sin.”

II. WHEN MAY THIS BLESSING BE OBTAINED?

While Christians generally admit the necessity of entire sanctification, many suppose it cannot be obtained until death. That most Christians do not experience the blessing until that late hour may be true; but it is a *melancholy* truth that so few seek to be stars of the first magnitude in the kingdom of God. A brief view of a few of the *promises, commands, examples, and prayers* of Scripture, may satisfy us that this blessing may be obtained before death, and may be enjoyed at any time, when sought in a Scriptural way.

1. *The promises*: “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you;” “The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, to serve him without *fear*, in holiness and righteousness, *all the days of our life*;” “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin;” “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” These

promises all embrace a *full* and *present* salvation from *all sin*, to be enjoyed "*all the days of our life*."

2. *The commands*: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;" "Be ye holy;" "Serve him with a perfect heart;" "Be perfect," &c. These commands refer only to the present time, and require immediate obedience.

3. *The prayers*: "Create in me a clean heart;" "Father, sanctify them through thy truth;" and in the same prayer our Savior says, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil;" "May the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, soul and body, be *preserved blameless* unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The apostle fixes the meaning of his prayer in reference to this point in the last clause, "*and preserve you blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*," or until death. It would be presumption to suppose David, the Savior, and St. Paul, did not expect the fulfillment of their prayers, and equally so to suppose they prayed for death, which must have been the case if entire sanctification cannot be experienced until death.

4. *The examples*: "Enoch walked with God;" "Noah was perfect in his generation;" "Job was a perfect man;" "Mark the perfect man," says David. Simeon and Anna, Zecharias and Elizabeth, were righteous before God, "walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." And the apostle says, "Let as many as be perfect be thus minded." These all were perfect, according to the dispensation in which they lived. But some say, these were inspired men, and inquire, Where are your witnesses now? If there were none, it would not disprove the doctrine; but a cloud of witnesses

are before us, in whose life and conversation nothing has appeared to contradict their profession. Among these we may mention the names of Fletcher, Bramwell, Carvosso, Abbott, Payson, Fisk, James B. Taylor, Lady Maxwell, Mrs. Fletcher, Hester Ann Rogers, and Mrs. Edwards.

Mr. Wesley says: "Four or five and forty years ago, when I had no distinct views of what the apostle meant by exhorting us to 'leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on unto perfection,' two or three persons in London, whom I knew to be truly sincere, desired to give me some account of their experience. It appeared exceedingly strange, being different from any thing I had heard before, but exactly similar to the preceding account of entire sanctification. The next year, two or three more persons at Bristol, and two or three in Kingswood, coming to me severally, gave me exactly the same account of their experience. A few years after, I desired all those in London to come to me all together, at the Foundery. That I might be thoroughly satisfied, I desired that man of God, Thomas Walsh, to be present with me. When we met, first one, then the other of us, asked them the most searching questions we could devise. They answered every one without hesitation, and with the utmost simplicity; so that we were fully persuaded they did not deceive themselves. In the years 1759, 1760, 1761, and 1762, their numbers multiplied exceedingly, not only in London and Bristol, but in various parts of Ireland, as well as England. Not trusting in the testimony of others, I carefully examined most of these myself; and in London alone, I found six hundred and fifty-two members of our society, who were exceedingly clear in their experience, and of whose testimony I could see no reason to doubt."

But, from Mr. Wesley's day, we may come down to our own times. Recent publications show a revival of this experience of the deep things of God, not only in

England and Ireland, but in America. In our own Church and others, we seldom hear of a revival in which witnesses of *perfect love* are not raised up. May the work spread, until it shall be as common to hear of souls cleansed as sinners converted.

III. HOW IS IT TO BE SOUGHT?

The answer is,

1. *By faith.* The word says "Sanctified by faith." There are two errors into which some seekers fall. 1. Expecting the witness before they believe, and refusing to believe without a sign. This is expecting the end without the use of the means. The language of faith is, not that he *has* done, or that he *will* do the work, but that he *doeth* it. 2. Another error, perhaps still more common, is seeking in a *legal manner*. The language of those who fall into this error is, "I am not good enough—I must fast, pray, read, deny self, and make great efforts, and great reformation before I can expect the blessing." These things are good and acceptable to God; but not when they are thrown between the soul and Christ. Will not God take the will for the deed? Is there not a shorter way—the way of direct access to God by faith, without the deeds of the law? But this faith implies,

2. *Entire consecration to God.* This consecration should be, 1. *Deliberate.* Do I firmly believe in the doctrine? Am I willing to live a holy life? Do I sincerely repent of the remaining corruption of my nature? Can I give up the dearest idol? Do I hunger and thirst after righteousness? Then, Lord, I give myself to thee. I am thy servant, thou hast redeemed me. 2. *Universal.* *All* must be dedicated. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your *bodies* a living sacrifice." There should be no reservation; *all* must be laid on the altar of God—soul, body, and estate, time, friends, and influence—*ALL*. 3. *Perpetual.* It is not

an experiment to be tried for a time, and then abandoned. It is made for all coming time.

“ Our souls and bodies we resign,
With joy we render thee
Our all, no longer ours, but thine
To all eternity.”

A consecration thus made, embracing *all the promises of God*, including all our *powers, acts, and possessions of body, mind, and estate, without any reserve, either in objects, time, or place, which contemplates its fulfillment in the divine*, and not in *human strength*, is substantially that *practical act of faith* in God which cannot fail to meet with his approbation, and which he will accompany with the witness of his Spirit. “Faithful is he that calleth you, who, also, will do it.” And now, dear reader, why tarriest thou? “Arise, shine, for thy light is come.” Enter this moment into the promised inheritance. If the blessing is obtained by simple faith, why delay? Let every motive be brought to bear this moment on thy heart. “Behold now is the day of salvation.” Only believe, and the blessing is thine.

“ *Faith*, mighty *faith*, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, It shall be done.
'Tis done; thou dost this moment save
With full salvation bliss;
Redemption through thy blood I have,
And spotless love and peace.”

Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

SERMON VIII.

BY REV. WILLIAM H. RAPER.

CHRIST'S DEATH VICARIOUS.

“When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,” Isaiah liii, 10.

“OF whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.” Yes, my brethren, this whole chapter belongs to Jesus, and none else. He it was who bore “*our* griefs, and carried *our* sorrows”—who was “wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.” Yes, and “we hid as it were our faces from him”—we “despised and rejected him.” And yet, notwithstanding all this, he consented to be made an offering for sin. The holy—the innocent Jesus, whose nature was deathless, because it had ever been sinless, was by no law of God under obligation to die for himself; otherwise, he could not have died meritoriously for others. Being free from all natural and penal obligation to die on his own account, he was at full liberty to assume the obligation for others. His death was an act of obedience: “He became obedient unto death.” It was not to human law that he forfeited his life; for his judge said, “I find *no fault* in him;” “I am innocent of the blood of this *just* person.” And he who betrayed him said, “I have betrayed *innocent* blood.” The law of his physical nature had no demands on his life. He, himself, said, “No man taketh my life from me—I lay it down of myself.” As much as to say, “My life is immortal; yet I, of my own self, consent to render it *vulnerable*.” His death, so far as man was an agent in it, was a downright murder. That which he suffered at the hands of his enemies, was no part of his meritorious sufferings. The Jews were officious intermeddlers in inflicting his death. There

was another cause at work, though unseen to man, that would have effected it. The invisible cup, in the hand of the Lord, contained the dreadful cause. 'The cup of woe—of trembling—of sorrows untold—of death in its most direful form, prepared by justice for a guilty world, and which his Father gave to him in the garden of Gethsemane, and in receiving which he exclaimed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" but "if this cup may not pass, except I drink it, thy will be done." In that cup was summed up that awful debt of suffering and death, contracted by our sinful race, and which we could not have paid and survived. But Christ having become our surety, in view of our insolvency, paid the debt for us, and now offers us the indemnity. O, thou immortal spirit of man! accept the indemnity and live—reject it and die!

My object in reading this text, is to show,

I. THAT THE DEATH OF CHRIST WAS SACRIFICIAL.

II. THAT IT WAS OFFERED TO GOD.

III. THAT IT WAS OFFERED IN OUR STEAD; *and, that the vicarious principle is found in the religious sacrifices of all the nations of antiquity*; which will go far to prove that it was an essential element of the primitive religion of man; and, consequently, an essential doctrine of Christianity, inasmuch as Christianity is primitive religion restored.

And, first, that the death of Christ was sacrificial, we only need consult the following texts of Scripture: "But now, once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the *sacrifice* of himself." He officiated at the altar as priest; himself was the sacrifice offered. The work was all his own. The merit his; and to him be all the glory. Again: "But this man, after he had offered one *sacrifice* for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God." Once more: "For even Christ our Pass-over is *sacrificed* for us." From the above passages of

Scripture, it is evident that Christ's death was not only sacrificiãl, but that the sacrifice was a sin-offering, and made in behalf of man. The latter text is antitypical of the Israelitish passover, which was instituted on the day preceding that awful night, when the angel of death, by the command of God, went forth throughout all the land of Egypt, and destroyed the first-born of all the families of Egypt; and, but for the blood of the paschal lamb, the sinful Hebrews would have shared the same fate; for when the angel found on the door-posts the blood of the sacrifice, he "passed over," and the plague was not upon them, to destroy them. So Christ, who, "by his own blood, obtained eternal redemption for us," is our passover; and the man whose soul is not sprinkled, and sanctified by this blood, must be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" whilst he that is sealed with this token of blood, shall be spared, "as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

Our second proposition is, that the death of Christ was a sacrifice offered to God. The offering was made to God; not as a martyr who offers his life to bear witness to the truth; for, in that case, the testimony is offered to those to whom the truth is first tendered, and who are to be convinced that it is truth: in which case, his sacrifice should have been offered to man. But, as we shall see, it was offered to God. "Who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God;" "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an *offering* and a *sacrifice to God.*" From these, as well as from many other passages of the sacred writings, it is clear, that Christ's death was a sacrifice made and exhibited to God for his acceptance. We lay it down as an incontrovertible truth, that no religious sacrifice, whatever be the form of religion, whether ancient or modern, Jewish or heathen, was offered to any one but the Deity. It is true,

that the heathen offered sacrifices to their heroes ; but not until they were deified. They, likewise, “ offered sacrifices to devils ;” but these were infernal gods. Deity, and Deity alone was to be propitiated by their sacrifices. In all cases whatsoever, they were presented to God, or the gods against whom they had offended—whose assistance they wished to obtain, or whose supremacy they intended to acknowledge.

Now, in these respects, the sacrifices of the heathen agreed with those of the Jews. Although Moses, the Jewish lawgiver, regulated the Jewish sacrifices, appointing the kinds of animals, and directing the mode of offering them, yet Moses did not originate the institution ; for we find it practiced in the earliest ages. “ Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, an offering to the Lord,” by which he acknowledged the supremacy of Jehovah. But “ Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock,” by which he acknowledged himself a sinner, and by which he supplicated pardon. We find Noah, likewise, erecting an altar unto God, immediately after he came out of the ark. Now, all these offerings, the blood of which was supposed to *speak* in behalf of the offender, were presented to the Deity. The blood of Abel’s offering *spoke* to God in his behalf ; but the blood of Jesus “ *speakeeth* better things than that of Abel.”

This leads us, thirdly, to remark, that these sacrifices were all, in every case where blood was shed, offered IN THE STEAD OF THE OFFENDER, and that by them he was released from the obligation to atone for his own guilt, by dying himself. The sacrifice was the price paid for the offender’s ransom. This constitutes their vicarious character.

The practice of offering religious sacrifices to Deity, was a universal practice among all the nations of antiquity. This fact cannot be doubted by the student of history.

Egypt, Chaldea, Phœnicia, Græce, Gaul, Rome, Carthage, Britain, and all the Isles of the Mediterranean sea, had their sacrifices, which they offered to the avenging gods. Now, as universal as was the practice of offering sacrifices, so universal was their vicarious character. When Agathocles defeated two Carthagenian armies, he drove the fugitives within the walls of their city. Being in great consternation, they assembled for consultation, and to devise the best means of defense. After much deliberation, they resolved that, as the cause of their calamities was the anger of Saturn, who, being incensed at them for having offered the children of slaves and strangers, in place of their own, their duty was to sacrifice, forthwith, two hundred children of the best families in Carthage, in order to propitiate the avenging god, and to obtain favor and assistance in that critical moment; and the decree was forthwith put into execution. The offering of the white bull, by the Egyptians, was a vicarious sacrifice. The manner of it was as follows: The owner of the bull, when he wished to present to Apis, his god, a sacrifice for his sins, was exceedingly careful to see that the animal was purely white. He then delivered it to a priest, appointed for that express purpose, who examined every part of its body, to ascertain if there were any black hairs upon it. If so, it was rejected; if not, he delivered it to the priest of the altar, who required the owner to place his hands on the head of the animal, and to confess his sins, and his desert of death on account thereof. By placing his hands on the head of the sacrifice, he transferred his sins to the beast, whose blood was then shed, as the ransom price for his life. Here the vicarious principle is clearly manifest; but not more so than in all the offerings of other nations. I feel myself fully sustained by history, in laying it down as an incontrovertible truth, that in all the bloody sacrifices of the Jews and heathen, the sacrifice was offered

direct to God, or their gods, and that the *life* of the *victim* was offered in *lieu* of the life of the owner. No, not a nation can be found, whose religious sacrifices of life and blood did not present the vicarious principle in bold relief. This being true, how shall we account for it? What cause could have produced such an entire unanimity of practice? A practice that prevailed from the head of the Ganges to the Pillars of Hercules, and from the Arctic ocean to the Cape of Good Hope: from Moses to Josephus, and from Sanconiathon to Mr. Rollin, we learn the *fact*. All the reasons that I have met with by which authors have attempted to account for the remarkable agreement in these two features of ancient sacrifices, may be summed up in the two following, to wit: Either that "the perception of a common principle led all men to adopt the practice, or that God instituted it as an essential element in that system of religion which he gave to the first generation of men." If the first reason be a correct one, that by the perception of a common principle all men were led to adopt the practice, then must it have been by the principle of intuition; which, having once been common to the intellectual constitution of man, would have continued, and which, of necessity, must still exist, thereby excluding the possibility of a difference of opinion on the great question of the vicarious atonement made by the sacrifice of Christ; but as no such common perception now exists, it is reasonable to conclude that it never did exist; and there being no adequate cause for such a universal effect, so far as we can perceive, it follows that God instituted the rite, and gave it to the first man to observe, and hand down to his posterity; and, inasmuch as the duty to offer in sacrifice the life of a pure animal for the sin of his soul was ordained by God, man discharged the duty under a sense of moral obligation, which gave it force and perpetuity.

Shem, Japheth, and Ham, were three prime roots,

whence sprang all the nations of the earth. They received the true religion from Noah, their father, who was cotemporary with Methuselah five hundred and ninety-nine years; and Methuselah being cotemporary with Adam two hundred and eighty-three years, was capable of giving to Noah all he had learned of Adam. Now, when the national branches shot off from the three generative roots, and had separated from each other, and settled in distant countries, a few generations produced vain speculations in theology, that greatly mutilated the beautiful original they had received from their ancestors. Most of the nations went so far in changing and adding to the original draft, that most of its former suitableness to the moral wants of man was obliterated, and nearly all its power to make him a virtuous being destroyed. Three essential elements of the original system remained, defying even speculation, superstition, and vice, to destroy them: these were *sin-offerings*—their being *made directly to God*, and their *vicarious* character. It is a main part of the present discourse to account for the remarkable preservation of these three doctrines, which we shall now attempt to do.

Man having been created a holy being, was, consequently, a happy being: holiness being the subordinate cause of his happiness. When he sinned against his Creator he lost his holiness, and, by consequence, his happiness; for happiness being the end of his being, and holiness the means to attain it, when he sinned he lost both. God having no more pleasure in his misery and death than he had in the sin that caused them, was induced to seek his restoration. This could not be done, except in accordance with the rules of his administration. Those rules were contained in that form of government under which man was created, which prescribed his duty and guarantied his rights, and was called a covenant. Now a covenant is only binding while both of the parties keep

to the contract. Man broke the contract, and forfeited his rights, and the protection secured by the covenant. Being guilty, he needed pardon; being morally polluted, he needed purifying; being under sentence of death, he needed redemption. Now, the rules for the administration provided for no such wants; for pardon, sanctification, and a resurrection were alike unknown in that code. To have granted them would have been unlawful; they not being provided for by law. God having still in view the end of man's creation, namely, his happiness, resolved on a new scheme for that purpose, which could not be carried into effect without a modification of the existing covenant, which, in effect, would amount to a "new covenant." What shall be done to make way for this new modification of law, or new covenant? Shall the first be repealed, or set aside? This would be violating eternal rectitude; for to repeal that which is infinitely right, (and God's laws are so,) would be infinitely wrong. What is to be done? Why let those parts of the covenant which have penal claims on man be satisfied, and the way will then be open for a newly modified system, in which provision shall be made for means and agencies necessary for the restoration of man to a state of holiness, that the final end of his being may be accomplished.

But what is the price of man's redemption? We answer, a full equivalent—life for life. Who will pay the price? A voice from the bosom of the Father answers, "*I will.*" In what way? "*My soul shall be made an offering for sin.*" This offer was accepted—the first covenant satisfied; and man being "*bought with a price,*" he was transferred to the new covenant, which made ample provision for him as a sinner, that he might be saved. This new covenant is a credit system: it grants great privileges to us on the suretiship of the Son of God, who, on our insolvency being ascertained, came forward and

paid down the price, by "offering himself, without spot, to God."

Although this new scheme was perfect in the mind of Jehovah, man was only intrusted with a rough draft, which was gradually filled up until the fullness of time came, when that which, in a great degree, "had been hid from ages, was made known." But this rough draft, or partial revelation of God's method of saving sinners, contained all the essential parts of the plan. A vicarious sacrifice, offered to God, was the first element; faith in the *end* of that sacrifice was the second. Now, as "Christ is the end of the sacrificial law for righteousness to every one that believeth," it is but reasonable to suppose that when God ordained sacrifices, he explained the end, or design thereof. This is his usual method, as in the case of the passover given to the Jews, and that of the supper ordained by Christ, who said, "This is, or, this represents my body; this my blood." Now, as the sacrifices offered under the law could not take away sin, (see Heb. x, 4,) they must have been intended to assist the faith of the offerer to discern that which *could* take away sin. That the whole sacrificial code was a system of faith is very clear. "By *faith*, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," is in perfect accordance with the sacred history on this subject.

Now, as the human intellect was so much impaired, and the understanding darkened by sin, man, in the early ages, could not have received divine truth by a purely intellectual course of instruction. This the divine goodness considered, and, in condescension to man's weakness, adopted the plan of similitude, figure, or type. These types addressed his senses, and assisted his faith to discern the true sacrifice, concerning which God had instructed him. Thus he was taught that, as a sinner, he had forfeited his life, and that his Maker had provided a sacrifice to be

offered in his stead. Hence, pardon of sin, and exemption from punishment by the merit of a propitiatory sacrifice, were subjects with which he became familiar, which became indelibly impressed upon his mind, and thus he was prepared to receive, as his only meritorious sacrifice, Him, whose "soul was made an offering for sin." The sacrificial law was our "schoolmaster," to instruct us by its types and shadows, and to prepare us to receive Christ, who was the end, or design of that law for righteousness to all who should accept of him.

This account of the origin of sacrifices, and the purposes and uses for which they were ordained, appears to us a reasonable one. If they were not intended to prepare the world's mind to receive the doctrine of Christ's sacrificial offering, we cannot conceive their use, or how they so universally obtained; or, having obtained, how the opinion that they atoned for human guilt should have obtained; for reason cannot perceive any fitness in the death of an inferior animal expiating for human crime, as there is no proportion between the life of an irrational animal and that of a man. This has often been perceived by heathen philosophers, and led them to ridicule the practice. Take away Christ as their antitype, and they are ridiculous to the eye of human reason. But allow them to be the types of Christ, our propitiation for sin, and then we can perceive their fitness, as exhibiting a wise and gracious plan, in which "mercy and truth have met together," and where "righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

To sum up all we have said on this subject in a few words, we would briefly state, that God, intending to redeem the world by the vicarious sacrifice of his Son, instituted the rite of sacrificing pure animals as a religious service, at the same time explaining the great doctrine to which it referred. This was well understood by men of the first ages. But in process of time, the human mind

became so sensualized, that it lost the substance, whilst it retained the shadow. It was revived again by Noah; for by it he "became heir to that righteousness which is by faith." In the dispersion of mankind, it was again lost, except in that branch of Shem in which we find Abraham. When Jacob went down to Egypt and died—his sons having also died, and their posterity being enslaved by an idolatrous nation with whom they mixed, their minds gradually sunk into the views of the Egyptians, and were more or less imbued with their idolatrous views and feelings; so that when they were left to themselves at the time Moses went up into the Mount to receive the law, they made a calf, in imitation of Apis, the god of Egypt, and instituted a feast to their idol. God found it necessary to institute a regular code of laws, in which the rite of sacrifice was re-enacted. As time rolled on, God revealed Christ to the prophets, and the light became more and more clear; so much so, that Isaiah beheld Christ in all his glorious offices of prophet, priest, and king. In the fullness of time, the seed of the woman was born—preached himself to the people, and, finally, offered himself a sacrifice to God, to expiate the guilt of all mankind. The character of his death was antitypical of the Mosaic rituals. In these a pure nature was requisite. So was Christ pure. A priest offered them. Jesus, our "great high priest, offered himself once for all." The sins of the offerer were laid on the head of his sacrifice. "Christ bore our sins in his own body on the tree." Those sacrifices were offered to God. "Christ offered himself, without spot, to God." The innocent animal died in the place and stead of the guilty offerer. "Christ suffered—the just for the unjust." "Scarcely for a righteous (that is, a merely just) man will one die; yet, peradventure, for a good man, some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet

sinners, Christ died *for us*." Why would not one die for a merely just man? Because the merely just man may be destitute of benevolence, and thus fall short of being a good man. And such a man dying, could not enter that society, of whom it will be said, "When I was hungry, ye fed me," and so fall short of heaven. Now he that dies for another takes his place, and the consequences following, and, therefore, would scarcely die for him. But as no such results can be feared in dying for a *good man*, one would dare to die for *him*. Now, in the same sense that one would die for a good man, Christ died for us. It is clear that he that would die for a good man, would necessarily die in his stead. It, therefore, follows, that Christ died in our stead. Glorious truth! A truth as old as the fall of man—attested by the religious sacrifices of all nations—a benefit as extensive as the wants of all men, and a remedy sufficiently efficacious to heal all the diseases of human nature. It is, likewise, an indemnity that meets all the demands of God's justice, and makes him just in justifying the sinner who heartily receives the indemnity.

Who can contemplate the immaculate character of the man Jesus—the disinterested benevolence of his life—the unparalleled pains and sorrows which he suffered, and not exclaim, "Behold what manner of love?" Or, who can contemplate his agony in the garden—his death on the cross, and think light of sin? But such is the fact. Jesus calls; but the sinner will not come to him, that he may have life. Jesus draws near; the sinner flies from him. Jesus weeps; the sinner laughs. Jesus groans; the sinner mocks. "And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads."

"I ask'd the Heavens, 'What foe to God hath done
This unexampled deed?' The Heavens exclaim,
'Twas man; and we in horror snatched the sun
From such a spectacle of guilt and shame.'

I ask'd the Sea; the Sea in fury boil'd,
And answered with his voice of storms, "'Twas man:
My waves in panic at his crime recoil'd,
Disclosed th' abyss, and from the centre ran.'
I ask'd the Earth; the Earth replied aghast,
'"'Twas man; and such pangs my bosom rent,
That still I groan and shudder at the past.'
To man, gay, smiling, thoughtless man, I went,
And ask'd him next. *He* turn'd a scornful eye,
Shook his proud head, and deign'd me no reply."

"Now, from the sixth hour, there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Then were the rocks rent, and the graves were opened, and the dead came out of their graves. "When Jesus had cried again with a loud voice, he yielded up the ghost." And the centurion, and they that were with him, when they saw and heard these things, exclaimed, "Surely this was the Son of God."

And thou, poor, fallen man, for whom he suffered these things, goest thou on unheeding them. If thou art destitute of gratitude for the greatest of all benefits, have pity on thyself. Do not despise this Jesus. If thou reject him, thou art undone; "for there remaineth no more (or no other) sacrifice for sin." His is the only name by which thou canst be saved. Neglect him no longer. O, thou poor, unthinking trifler, be wise for once. Repent in dust and ashes before God. And if thou dost now repent, cast off thy fears: "Wherefore, he is able to save all them to the uttermost, who come to God by him." Come, O, come now, delay no longer; for behold now is the accepted time, and behold now is the day of salvation. Art thou sick and sore broken, he came to "heal the broken hearted." Art thou bound in affliction and iron, he came to "set the captives free." Art thou ignorant, he is thy wisdom to make thee wise. Art thou guilty, he is thy

righteousness to justify thee—polluted, he is thy sanctification to purify thee. Does a prospect of the future present the cold, damp grave, he is thy redemption to raise thee from the tomb. Approach him as thy best friend; for he loved thee when a sinner. Believe on him as thy righteousness, and thou shalt be saved. Take him as thy ransom, and fear not to trust thy all to him. You were born a sinner, and it was not your fault: you had no agency in the cause that made you a child of wrath. If you are lost and cursed from the presence of God, it will not be on account of your being the polluted offspring of a sinful parent; but this will be the cause, *God provided an all sufficient Savior, and you rejected him*; for it is written, “He that *believeth not* shall be damned.” You are diseased; God has provided a remedy; there is no other: accept it and live—reject it and die. But why will ye die? Turn ye from your evil ways, and ye shall live.

SERMON IX

BY REV. JOHN QUIGLEY

THE CAUSES AND CURE OF UNBELIEF.

“He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God,” Rom. iv, 20.

THE plan of salvation is adapted to the wants of mankind in every possible condition in life. After furnishing the necessary instruction, and securing power to act, it requires *faith, only*, as the condition of acceptance with God; and for unbelief, alone, it excludes from the divine favor. Its language to the most guilty and polluted is, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;” “He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

But though this fundamental doctrine of Christianity is characterized by great simplicity, there is a great variety of instrumentalities by which unbelief is propagated, and by which faith may be cultivated. The interesting facts connected with the history of our text, furnish instructions on these subjects well worthy of improvement.

Let it be observed, that God's promise of future posterity to Abraham, was contrary to the established order of nature, and opposed to the experience of all mankind; and, consequently, unsupported by any ground of hope, except the naked promise, upon the authority of which, alone, it is said, "He believed in hope." Upon the same authority, he reversed the decree of nature in his own person; for, "he considered not his own body now dead." Having thus dispensed with all possible embarrassments, he adopted the promise as full security for the thing promised, and rejoiced as if it were already in his possession. The reason of his assurance is seen in that he considered God able to perform that which he had promised; and the motives by which he was actuated appear in the fact that he gave "glory to God."

Though the great principles of unbelief and faith are always the same, and invariably produce the same effects; yet the causes by which they are propagated, vary with the ceaseless changes of society, and, also, with the nature of the promises. Hence, it becomes our duty to meet such difficulties as conflict with the faith of the Church in the present age, and to develop such facts as may contribute to her confidence and assurance of hope.

I. SOME OF THE CAUSES OF UNBELIEF AMONG CHRISTIANS OF THE PRESENT AGE.

1. Much of the apostasy which we lament, arises from *hasty and partial views of religion*. No matter in what enterprise we engage, unless we take a comprehensive view of it in the outset, disappointment and discouragement

are inevitable. The apostate soldier had only dreamed of the spoils of victory, and, consequently, fled from the roar of battle. The defeated votary of science, had only thought of the glory reflected from the lofty towers of her temple, and, consequently, he fainted in the labyrinths near its base. The many backsliders, and wandering pilgrims of the cross, but too plainly show that unexpected difficulties have intercepted their path; difficulties which were overlooked when they stood at the baptismal font, and swore eternal allegiance to the King of heaven. Inspired with the sacred promises of protection in danger, and of success in battle—enchanted with the hope of love, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost, and enraptured with the prospect of the rich spoils of victory, they were unprepared to take lessons of mortification and self-abasement—to be counted the filth and offscouring of the world—to strive, unto blood, against sin, and to peril even their lives in defense of the cross. Hence, they turned away, buried their hopes, and sat down to weep among the tombs.

2. *Reference to past sins* is frequently the cause of staggering. While it is admitted that lively recollections of the horrible pit, with all its darkness, pestilence, and serpent brood, is calculated to awaken gratitude and press the soul to the cross, we aver, that nothing but evil can result from sad reflections upon the history of our lives, or from fearful apprehensions of the guilt of the past. Such emotions, cherished, tend to expel confidence, gratitude, and love from the heart, and thus to rob Jesus of his glory, and sunder the cable of hope, leaving the bewildered soul to be driven before the stormy winds of despair, without star, pilot, or rudder. It is said that certain wild animals may be induced to look back, by the shrill whistling of the pursuer, and thus be arrested in their flight; which may serve to illustrate the policy of the base accuser of the children of God, and the folly of those who listen to his false criminations.

3. *Erroneous views of human weakness* often prove a snare to the feet of Zion's pilgrims. To know our helplessness, we admit, is absolutely necessary to our acceptance and appreciation of the power of grace, by which we are kept; but when we esteem the weakness of our nature an impediment to Christian experience and duty, we reject the promises, limit the power of God, and place ourselves beyond the reach of help. The existence of this error may be detected by the frequent use of such expressions as, "It *seems* to me I cannot;" "*But* I feel my weakness;" "I know the hinderance is in me." All this implies, that if we had more strength, the power of God would be available, but that, in our present condition, it is not. Thus the salvation of God, providing all the merit, knowledge, and power necessary for the most guilty, ignorant, and helpless of mankind, is barred out of the heart, and we are exhibited, the wandering, staggering counterpart of Abraham, who "considered not his own body now dead." The absurdity and sinfulness of such complaints appear the more obvious, when we reflect that they are all indirect contradictions of the word of God, which says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him;" "My grace is sufficient for you;" "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear."

4. *An undue deference to impressions* is frequently a source of unbelief. When we consider the power of the imagination, together with the fact that numerous wicked spirits have, at least, a limited access to the human mind, we are compelled to admit that we live in a world of *impressions*. Painful illustrations of this are but too numerous. Swedenborgism, Mormonism, and Millerism have sacrificed their thousands upon this altar. Though but comparatively few have exhibited that bold fanaticism which drags

its victim from the fold, and blasts the hope of return, yet it will be admitted that very many Christians are much injured by the pursuit of impressions. The incipient workings of this fatal principle may be discovered by the frequent use of such expressions as the following: "I did not *feel* like praying;" "If I *feel* like speaking, I will." It is easily seen, that whoever makes *feeling* a rule of action, refers to the state of his own mind as the standard of action, rather than to the word of God. Indeed, the secret of nearly all the fluctuations of religious society, may be found in a reckless disregard of that sacred precept, "Try the spirits." All Christians should, therefore, be admonished never to follow any impression, unless the object of their desire is promised, or their course plainly authorized by the divine testimony. The slightest disregard of this principle is dangerous, and leads to criminal staggering at the promises.

5. *An absorbing desire for the exciting effects of religion*, is the cause of more wandering than many are aware of. Happiness in the service of God is generally sought for one of the following reasons, by those who err in its pursuit: 1. For present recreation and comfort. This is evinced by a desire for whatever is novel, or exhilarating, in reading, singing, or the labors of the pulpit, and a distaste for unsophisticated, solemn, heart-searching truth, without which no Christian can either grow or live. Such persons may be detected, by contrasting their conduct in times of revival with what it is a few months afterward. The effect of their mistake is, to divert their minds from the true object of religion to *mere* momentary enjoyment, and they, consequently, soon fall into the condemnation of those who followed Christ for the loaves and fishes. 2. Present happiness in the service of God is sought as a token, or sign, of his favor toward us. Here let us distinguish between what is allowable and what is not. First, then, we may experience the witness of the Spirit, the

powerful baptism of the Holy Ghost, and the consequent joyful emotions, as the result of faith, which acts previously to, and independently of, these emotions; and this witness and baptism may be applied in confirmation of the divinity of our religion, and as proof of our adoption into the heavenly family. But, secondly, we may not seek for any witness, or emotion, in order to the attainment of the favor of God, or any higher degree of grace, for the simple reason that all the joys of religion are the *effect*, and not the *cause* of communion with God.

As it is important that the mind should clearly discriminate between naked faith as the cause, and happiness as the effect, we will illustrate by the following simile: You present a cup of cold water to a blind, thirsty beggar, and request him to take it and drink; he declines, however, and declares that he must both feel the cup, and taste the water, before he can be induced to stretch out his hand to receive it. Would you not assure him that he never could experience its effects till after he had taken the cup and drank its contents? Into this very absurdity do those Christians fall, who express a desire for holiness, and think that they can frequently "almost grasp it," but fail for want of experimental demonstration. Plainly syllogized, the argument stands thus: Whatever is matter of feeling must be received before it is felt; but the love of God is matter of feeling; therefore, this love must be received before it is felt. It follows, therefore, that as the love of God must be received into the soul before it can produce any experimental effects, some other means besides feeling must be employed in its reception. That means is faith only, which is always followed, but never preceded by the enjoyment of religion.

6. *Dependence upon works* is, even to this day, the cause of much delusion and wavering. We do not mean that those who err hope to merit any thing by works,

neither have we reference to works of obedience, which are the infallible consequence of living faith. But the works, out of which grows the deception which we wish to detect, may be called *preparatory*, and designed to qualify the heart for the exercise of faith, and the reception of love. It is exceedingly difficult to detect this snare of the devil; and yet it lurks in the heart of every Christian who feels that something must be done before he can receive the blessing which he desires; as, for example, that he must read certain books, fast often, deny himself with more rigor, and pray more frequently and ardently. Again: whenever the intervention of time is deemed necessary in order to make room for certain exercises of the heart, success may be regarded as utterly hopeless, from the fact that the blessing which we seek must be received by faith, or not at all; that faith cannot exist without present expectation, and that expectation cannot exist while something must be done, or some period of time must intervene. Hence, it follows, that all *preparatory* works are fatally delusive, and must be abandoned as a ground of hope, together with the time necessary for their performance, before the soul can approach God and grasp the prize. He who would secure the blessing of grace, must embrace the promises *just as he is*, depend on Christ *alone*, and expect and receive the blessing *now*.

II. THE CURE OF UNBELIEF.

That faith is the only remedy for this fatal spiritual disease, is readily admitted by all. But by what process we may best arrive at the cure, remains open for investigation. From our observation of the present state of the Church, we believe that close attention to the following points will contribute much to her recovery and advancement.

1. *We should permanently settle in our minds all the fundamental principles of our theological system.* It will not do that they be written in a book; they must be

established in the heart, and placed entirely beyond controversy. By fundamental principles, is meant such features of our system as cannot be dispensed with without destroying the whole: such as, the existence of God; the authenticity of the Scriptures; salvation by grace, through faith; the resurrection of the body; the doctrine of a final general judgment and future rewards and punishment. These points, together with all others which are necessary to the integrity of the whole, should be fully settled, to the exclusion of all doubt.

We may stand upon the mountain top and contemplate the sublimity of the flowing river, the grandeur of the rolling ocean—we may search for their hidden gems and coral treasures, without doubting the reality of the scenery around us. So may we contemplate God, as he shines forth in the beaming glories of the heavens, as he smiles in the infinite wisdom and beneficence of his word and providence—we may gaze upon his love and mercy, as exhibited in the gift of his Son, and reflect upon his fatherly goodness and protection, till our whole soul swells with unutterable emotions of reverence, gratitude, and devotion. And all this may, and should be, without one single doubt as to the certainty of the facts by which we are thus inspired. Sound reason itself dictates that all points which cannot be settled without revelation, should be left entirely to revelation, so far as their truth is concerned. Suppose, while you are reading your Bible, a doubt enters your mind as to the certainty of the resurrection. Where will you go for evidence to settle the question? Does human reason, experience, or the operations of nature, cast more light upon the subject than the Bible? If so, then the Bible is an inferior light, and totally unworthy of your confidence; and with it goes the whole superstructure of your religion. If not, then your search is endless, and hopeless. Hence, if you ever dismiss the doubt, it must be upon the authority

of revelation, and it might far better have been done at first. It, therefore, follows, that whoever rests eternal things upon any other foundation than the immutable "thus saith the Lord," dishonors God, degrades reason, and jeopardis his soul. Jesus never failed to rebuke the slightest doubt in his disciples, nor to point out its dangerous consequences.

Should it be objected, that while the subject is of such a nature that we may doubt, and that when the suggestion arises we must doubt, we answer, if this be true, it puts an end to the religion of the Bible, and the hope of Christianity; for many of its most important truths are yet future, and cannot be demonstrated but by revelation. But we deny the *necessity* of doubting. It is, in this case, a voluntary act of the mind. By grace, every temptation may be immediately hurled back upon its disappointed author. If I am confirmed in an opinion by one hundred good witnesses, I need not abandon it because it is contradicted by one whom I suspect, both for ignorance and dishonesty. Again: God has not put himself upon trial before the tribunals of either men or devils. He pledges the necessary ability to believe, and demands our faith under penalty of his eternal wrath. It is, therefore, our privilege and most imperious duty, never, for one moment, to doubt or fear, but to receive every promise as equivalent to the thing promised, making no difference between the divine pledges of sanctification, the resurrection, and eternal glory, so far as their *certainly* is concerned, and the actual possession of them. Then shall Zion walk in the favor of God, bask in the light of his Spirit, and triumph in the highway cast up for his ransomed children.

We must not dismiss this point without observing, that there are many who deny that they are troubled with doubts respecting the fundamental doctrines of the Bible,

but complain, that all their doubts and fears have respect to themselves, averring their certainty of eternal life if they "*would* only do their duty." To show the fallacy of this plea, we assume, that if they doubt, there must be some reason for it, and, according to their own showing, it is in themselves. The causes which produce doubts and fears in those who complain of themselves may be numerous: such as, a deceitful heart, an impatient disposition, violent temptations, bereavements, persecutions, &c.; but the grounds upon which their doubts are predicated, are all reducible to the two following points, either, 1. They doubt because they think they *cannot* do their duty; or, 2. They doubt because they think they *will not* do their duty. If it be true that their weaknesses and impediments are such that they *cannot* perform what God requires of them, they need not fear; for God can no more condemn them for what is unavoidable, than he can consign infants and idiots to perdition for the neglect of duties which they never could have performed. But why can they not do their duty? To this question there can be but one answer; and that is, simply, because they suppose God has not furnished them with the power; for they must admit, that if they had the ability within their reach, they could succeed. Here, then, the ostensible difficulty, so charitably attributed to themselves, is found to be a flat contradiction of one of the fundamental truths of the Scriptures which they profess to believe, and which guaranties to them power "*exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.*" They are now driven to the last, and only remaining ground of fear; and that is, because they *will not* do their duty. This is not subject of doubt, but of consciousness and certainty; and the reasons for fear are as awful as the inflexible justice of God defended by his eternal omnipotence.

2. *Numerous occasions of unbelief may be avoided by habitually consecrating ourselves to God in all things.* The propriety of this will be seen, when we reflect upon the many new duties which occur, and the unexpected trials through which we are called to pass. For instance, a young man, who has long since given up all for Christ, becomes impressed that he is called to the work of the ministry. Immediately doubts arise as to the truth or falsity of the call. If he knew that it was from God, he would obey ; but he cannot fully decide. These circumstances expose him to a flood of violent temptations. Does he resolve to go forward, he is sorely assailed with fears that he is running before he is sent. Does he conclude not to yield to the impression, he is condemned for disobedience. In this dilemma, he toils till he is shorn of his strength, and only escapes as did Jericho's sojourner, stripped, wounded, and half dead. All Christians are exposed to similar difficulties, whenever any uncertainty arises with respect to their duty, and they can only be avoided by their resigning themselves afresh into the hands of Christ, to do or suffer his will in all things, as his opening providence may direct. A consciousness of this state in the hour of uncertainty and trial, will effectually sustain the soul against all the accusations of the adversary. Therefore, whenever the Christian sees danger arising, let him consecrate himself anew to Christ, with all his cares and responsibilities ; then, when the storm is over, he will feel that all is well, as Christ himself has conducted to the issue. Thus shall the tempter be foiled, and all things work together for his good. O, how many sighs would be hushed, how many tears be dried up, were all the children of God to live in a state of constant submission to his will.

3. *Appeal should be made to the Bible alone as the rule of all our actions.* This would cut off the pursuit of impressions ; the word always being safe, irrespective of all

imaginations or temptations. 2. It would render us entirely independent of the dangerous example of those professed Christians, who, by following the imaginations of their own hearts, and the desires of the flesh, would lure us from the path of duty. 3. It would prevent all delay of duty, or modification of our conduct, on account of a want of feeling, which, we have seen, God has never recognized as a standard of our actions. Observing this rule, we have only to inquire, what we shall be, and what we shall do, receive the answer which God has written, and go forward.

4. *Humble, but prompt confession*, is so absolutely necessary, that no man can either attain unto, or retain the salvation of God without it. The reasons why confession is not made by many who seek the Lord, are, generally, either pride of heart, which shrinks from some requirement, or despises some feature of Christianity, or the fear of falling into some mistake; or, of backsliding from the attainments which we are called to acknowledge. Remove these difficulties, and confession is made without any hesitation; let them remain, and they incur the frown of God.

Confession implies public acknowledgment, 1. Of the doctrines of the Bible. 2. Of our desires and purposes to embrace them. 3. Of the grace to which we have already attained. From the clearest conviction of duty, we record it as a most important truth, that the least equivocation with respect to either of the above points, will effectually close the heart against the Spirit of God; for, “whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I, also, deny before my Father which is in heaven.” But, on the contrary, a frank performance of this duty will contribute to our faith, and open our bosoms to the most propitious smiles of heaven. “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the *mouth* confession is made unto salvation.”

5. *Finally, we should act from but one motive*, and that should always be defined in the following, or similar language: "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." *Two eyes*, in the service of God, are equivalent to none: the whole body shall be full of darkness. Hence, great care should be taken in the regulation of the motives from which we act. Christians sometimes act from mere impulses which arise in social life, without any special object in view. This course is exceedingly dangerous; exposing the soul to a torrent of temptations, which sweeps it away from Christ, like a bubble upon a wave.

Again: we are in danger of mixing our motives with references to the opinions of men. Whenever we pause one moment in the path of duty, to inquire what men may think, or what they may say, we are suddenly bewildered with *double sight*, and led away captive. Some act from mere sense of duty, without any well-defined design to glorify God; and still another class perform duty from the fear of backsliding; not that they care so much for dishonouring God, and injuring the Church, as that they dread the backslider's fate. Soon, such service becomes an irksome drudgery—ungrateful as hatred, and irregular as the dreams of guilt.

While it is contended that all the above motives taken together cannot sustain the soul one hour, it is admitted that no Christian should disregard the good opinion and friendship of his fellow-men, or be indifferent to his own personal welfare, or the claims of justice. But the central star, which fixes his eye, must be above all such considerations; and he must pursue it with steady gaze, resting all the interests of time and eternity upon the decision of this one, simple question, "*What will please God?*" Here, and here *alone*, is absolute safety; for though he may err, his heart remains uncondemned, and his conscience void of

offense, and he still finds free access to Him "who is touched with the feeling of his infirmity."

By such a course, the Christian will be enabled to exercise *strong faith*, and glorify God, as did Abraham. Having left the cypress shades of unbelief, and established principles which, while they exist, interdict the possibility of return, he never can be "entangled in the yoke of bondage." But even here he cannot stand still; for such is the nature of the Christian warfare, that he who will not retreat must fight; so that all the powers of his faith are called into constant exercise, and every faculty of his soul is developed by perpetual conflict. He, consequently, becomes acquainted with every device of the enemy, and counts it all joy when he falls into divers temptations, accounting the discipline of his soul of more value than the ease and pleasure of the most quiet retreat. Again: the war can have but one termination. To make a truce after the conflict is begun, is impossible, and retreat he will not; it, therefore, only remains for him to fight till the battle turns in his favor, and he is enabled to rejoice over the spoils of the enemy. So far from coveting peace, he provokes every foe with constant aggression, and invades every inch of territory within his reach.

Such was the faith that delivered oppressed Israel, overthrew the walls of Jericho, subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, and summoned the earthquake to the rescue of the imprisoned apostles. With this faith, the believer, "out of weakness is made strong—waxes valiant in fight," and is enabled "to put to flight the armies of the aliens." Or, turning away from scenes of conflict, he is led into "green pastures and beside still waters," there to inhale fresh odors from rosy bowers, pluck ripe fruit from living vines, and bathe in sunny fountains; while earth becomes to him a paradise restored. Finally, it enables him to leave the world with-

out regret, shake hands with death as with a familiar friend, lift the vail of eternity, see God with open vision, and rest for ever in his bosom.

SERMON X.

BY REV. MICHAEL MARLAY.

CHRIST VIEWED AS THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD.

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,” John i, 29.

THESE words were spoken by John the Baptist, who was the son of Zacharias, a Jewish prophet, himself an accredited prophet, who, according to the testimony of Christ, was equal, if not superior, to any who had appeared before him. He began his ministry in the wilderness of Judea, about the time there was a general expectation among the people of the Jews that Messiah would appear; and, on account of his elevated moral character, and the eccentricity of his life and manners, the Jews concluded that he must be the Messiah, and sent a deputation from Jerusalem to ask him who he was. John promptly answered, declaring that he was “not the Christ.” When they pressed the inquiry further concerning his character, and the nature of his mission, that they might give an answer to those who sent them, John declared himself to be “the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord.” While Jerusalem and all Judea came to John’s baptism, Jesus, also, came from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized of him; but John forbade him, saying, “I have need to be baptized of thee.” Jesus further explained the design of his thus coming to him, “that they might fulfill all righteousness;” whereupon John made no further objections, but baptized him: “And, lo,

the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Not long after this, John seeth Jesus coming unto him, upon which occasion he uttered the words of the text, and assigned as the reason for his thus confidently proclaiming Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah, that "he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is *He* which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." In treating this subject, we will,

I. CONSIDER THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST.

II. THE WORK HE CAME TO DO.

III. DIRECT ATTENTION TO THIS EXTRAORDINARY PERSONAGE.

1. *The character of Christ*, "the Lamb of God." In giving this character, we shall not attempt any analogy between the animal named in the text and the blessed Lord, because we cannot allow that any of the attributes of character belonging to the Messiah are found in the lamb; nor do we believe that such attempts are either honorable to the Savior, or calculated to advance the interests of religion. When the great Creator instituted the sacrificial service, as a type of the sacrifice of Christ, who is called "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," he saw proper to select the lamb; especially in the case of the passover, and the morning and evening sacrifices. Hence the propriety of calling the great antitype the "Lamb of God."

It will be recollected, also, that the type was not only to be of this description of animals, but that the particular animal was to be *perfect* of its kind. So the promised Messiah was not only to be of the seed of David, according to the flesh, but was to be a *perfect man*, in every

sense of the word: "Holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." And such was Jesus of Nazareth, who, according to the Jews themselves, "spake as never man spake." In all the relations of life through which he passed, he filled the measure of a perfect man: "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." The enemies of the Lord Jesus charge that he was put to death under the sentence of the law, and that his innocence cannot be successfully maintained. We think, however, that a careful examination of the proceedings of the Jews in finding him guilty, and condemning him to death, will clearly show that he was condemned, and put to death, without the slightest shadow of just cause. When he was taken by the Jews, they led him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, and put him upon his trial, without any formal charge, hoping, no doubt, that they would be able to make out a charge after hearing the testimony in the case; but all such attempts failed. Though a host of witnesses were examined, they found none who were agreed in what they said, until, at the last, came two, who said, "This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days." Now, to speak against the temple was deemed a capital offense. For prophesying against the city and temple, Jeremiah was said to be worthy of death by the priests and prophets of his day; and it was one of the charges laid by the false witnesses against Stephen, that he had spoken "blasphemous words against this holy place." But to give the words of the Savior the greatest latitude of interpretation, they could not be made to mean speaking *evil* of the temple, even had the words been as the witnesses stated, which, by the way, is doubtful. Yet, as the declaration of Christ, as to the destruction of the temple, was accompanied with the promise to build it again in three days, the words could not fairly be construed into speaking against the temple. All this, however, availed nothing—

his condemnation being resolved upon; and the high priest not being quite bold enough to pronounce sentence upon so vague a charge, without fortifying it by what he might draw forth from our Lord himself, wholly laid aside all that had been said by the witnesses, in order to question Christ upon a higher and graver matter, and proceeded to lay him under the most solemn adjuration: "*I adjure thee,*" said he, "*by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.*" This was a Jewish mode of placing a witness under oath; and, after such a sanction, the answer of the witness was, as we should express it, upon oath. Though our Lord had maintained an unbroken silence during all the examination that had gone before, he now answers without hesitation, and fully, declaring himself to be "the Christ, the Son of God," and that his enemies would see him "sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." On hearing this, "the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy: what further need have we of witnesses?—what think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death."

In the answer of Christ to this question, he claimed to be the Messiah, and, also, that he was THE SON OF GOD. Now, it is evident that he could not be condemned simply for professing to be the Messiah, against which there was no law; and it would have been most absurd for a people who were anxiously waiting, from age to age, for the appearance of Messiah, to have made it a capital offense for any one to profess to be that Messiah. If, then, it was not because he said, "I am the Christ," that he was condemned, it follows that it was because he added to this profession, that he was "*the Son of God,*" and would be demonstrated as such by the dignity and glory of his second coming, in the clouds of heaven. As we find that on having previously professed himself to be the Son of God,

the Jews took up stones to stone him as a blasphemer, it is clear that they understood this profession as implying an assumption of divinity, which our Lord himself never treated as a mistake, by explaining the phrase in any lower sense than they understood it, either on the occasion referred to, or on his trial.

This, then, was the alledged blasphemy for which our Lord was sentenced to death by the Sanhedrim; and this was acknowledged by the Jews themselves, who urged his death, and who mocked him upon the cross, because "he said he was the Son of God."

But why this hasty procedure? Why not examine the subject calmly and fully? Surely the Jews had a deep interest in having a right understanding of this important matter. Surely they could not be ignorant of the fact, that their own Scriptures had entitled the Messiah the Son of God, as in the second Psalm; and had declared that he would come in the clouds of heaven, as in the prophecy of Daniel, to which our Lord referred. They could not have forgotten the stupendous miracles that had been wrought by him in the neighborhood of Jerusalem—the raising of Lazarus and the widow's son. They ought to have recollected, also, that when the wise men came from the east, and inquired of Herod where Christ was to be born, that Herod called the Sanhedrim together, who, after due examination, answered that Bethlehem of Judea was the place; for thus it was written by the prophet: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel; *whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*" Now, as the former part of this text settled the question as to the *nativity* of the Savior, the latter part most certainly ascribes divinity to him; and the Jews were inexcusable for having overlooked this clear and plain proof of his divinity, in the

same Scripture relied on by them in proving his birth-place. They are, therefore, convicted of the most downright ignorance, or wicked perversion of the word of God, in condemning him for having claimed to be the Son of God, even in their own sense of the phrase as implying proper divinity, because their own Scriptures sustained the claim. It is true, that when they took him before Pilate, they charged him with claiming to be a king, in a sense adverse to the interest of Cæsar; but when Pilate examined him on this point, he explained, to the satisfaction of the Governor, by declaring that "his kingdom was not of this world," and so perfectly did they fail of convicting him of crime, that even Pilate said, "*I find no fault in this just man;*" and again, "*I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.*"

There is another view in which Jesus could not claim to be the Messiah, without possessing proper divinity. When God instituted the great sacrificial type, there was an altar to be erected, and a victim to be provided: neither of which could be dispensed with. Both were essential in order to an acceptable approach to God; and, according to Christ, the altar was the most essential part in making the atonement. He said to them, "Ye fools and blind, for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar which sanctifieth the gift?" Most evidently the Savior intended to teach, that the altar performed the most essential part in the sacrificial service. Now, had Christ possessed but one nature, and that a suffering nature, how could he be the antitype of this divinely appointed type? But allowing that he was both God and man, then his *divinity* answering to that part of the type that consisted of the altar, and his *humanity* answering to that part that consisted of the victim, we have a complete antitype. Thus it appears, beyond the possibility of doubt, that Christ is the true Messiah, or "Lamb of God"—that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled,

and separate from sinners;" and that he was put to death without the slightest shadow of guilt being made out against him.

II. In the second place, we will consider *the work he came to do*—"taketh away the sin of the world." By the sin of the world, we understand the sin of Adam to be meant. When the Lord placed him in the garden of Eden, he said unto him, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, *thou shalt not eat of it*; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, *thou shalt surely die*." The prohibition was *positive*, and the penalty was *death*. But notwithstanding this fearful threatening, man put forth his hand, and transgressed the law; and in the consequences of this act the whole race was involved. Man was affected in his *moral relations*, and *nature*. The apostle of the Gentiles teaches, that, "By the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation"—that, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Here we are taught, that both moral and natural evil have been entailed on us by the offense of *one man*. This original sin was emphatically an *unpardonable sin*. There was no condition in the covenant under which the first man sinned; and, unless released therefrom by the aid of another, he must surely die. Since, then, the penalty of death was not immediately executed in all its extent upon the first sinning pair, and is not immediately executed upon their sinning descendants—since they were actually restored to the Divine favor, and the same blessing is offered to us—since, "by the righteousness of one, the free gift comes upon all men unto justification of life," our inquiries must be directed to the nature and reason of that change in the conduct of the Divine Being, in which he lays aside, in so great a measure, the sternness and

inflexibility of his office as Judge, and becomes the dispenser of grace and favor to fallen, guilty man.

The opponents of the doctrine of atonement generally hold, that God may give up his right to obedience, and forgive sins, in the exercise of *sovereign prerogative*. To this it may be answered, that God is not to be regarded as a *mere sovereign*, but as a righteous, *moral administrator*; and, consequently, he cannot give up his right to obedience without showing such a disregard to the principles of moral rectitude as would destroy all moral government, and leave the world to the government of blind *fatalism*.

Others claim that repentance makes it morally fit that God should pardon the sinner, though he might not do so without penitence. Now, if repentance be taken in a sense, such as man is capable of performing, of course, he would always repent, rather than be punished, and so defeat, in all cases, the object of the Law-maker. But if we take repentance in the Scripture sense, as the gift of Christ—as the apostle has said, “Him hath God exalted, for to give repentance, and forgiveness of sins”—then, if Christ was bound to give this repentance to one man, *unconditionally*, he would be equally bound to bestow it upon all men; and would, thereby, affect a virtual repeal of the law, and an abrogation of all moral government, by effectually providing, in all cases, against the punishment of vice. But, turning our attention to the word of God, we learn that “without shedding of blood is no remission;” that “it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” Again: it is said, “Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price”—“with the precious blood of Christ, as of a *lamb* without blemish.” And again; “But now, once, in the end of the world, hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” From all these declarations, and many more of the same import, we are forced to the conclusion that the doctrine of

the apostle was, that, without the shedding of the blood of Christ, there was no salvation for fallen, guilty man—that the strong arm of justice held him bound over to death—that judgment had been rendered against him—that the penal arm of the law could not be satisfied with any thing short of a victim, upon which it might fall. Hence, all those passages of Scripture, which so fully teach the great doctrine of atonement, and connect the salvation of man in all cases with the death of Christ: “He bare our sins in his own body on the tree;” “Surely, he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted: but he was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities, the chastisement of *our* peace was upon him, and with his stripes *we* are healed.” After these plain and pointed Scripture declarations, let no man say that Jesus died as other men die; or, that he did not die in man’s room and stead.

Nor was it in the power of the Jews or Romans to take away his life. “No man taketh my life from me; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” The same almighty power that enabled him to rise from the dead, would have enabled him to live on, after his side was opened, and all the blood in his body had flowed out. When on the cross, he did not sink gradually, as men generally die; but spake with a *full, strong voice* until the *hour was come*, when “it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and put him to grief.” Then he said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit, and gave up the ghost;” most evidently, dying of his own intention. He died as an atoning sacrifice—as the propitiation for the sins of the *whole world*. All agree that the Savior did die, and all agree that death was the penalty of the law; but as Christ had not offended against the law, but had magnified the law, and made it honorable, by his sinless obedience to all

its precepts, he was under no necessity of dying, to meet the demands of the law in his own case. The law could not command him to die, as an *unoffending subject*; therefore, it is settled beyond the possibility of doubt, that he died as *our substitute*.

It has been sometimes maintained by semi-Arians, who oppose the divinity of Christ, and yet allow that some kind of an atonement was necessary, that a pure and holy finite being—one who was superhuman, was all that the law could require; and that such a being presents a more dignified offering to God, than is found in the humanity of the Savior, according to the Trinitarian view. They, doubtless, err, not knowing the Scriptures; for were it allowed that a finite being might be offered as a substitute, such being must be of the same nature as the sinner, and could only atone for one individual, according to the principles of divine justice, which require *life for life*.

They, also, overlook the importance of the union of the divine and human natures in the person of the Son of God, by which infinite merit is imparted to the death of Christ: “He was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man.” He was the “root and offspring of David, and the bright, and morning star.” Thus being God and man in one person, though the divine nature could not suffer as victim, yet, according to Christ’s explanation of the relative merits of the altar and victim, in the atoning sacrifice of the law, the altar was the most essential, as it “sanctified the gift.” So in the death of Christ, the divinity sanctified the humanity, and gave to the death of Christ *infinite merit*. As the divinity and humanity were united in the *one person* of the Son of God, though the divine nature could not suffer, the *divine person could*. One of his natures being a suffering nature, as Mr. Sherlock says, whatever was peculiar to either of

the natures, was *common* to the *person*. And, thus, the divinity of Christ was more essential in the atoning sacrifice than the suffering humanity, though neither could be dispensed with. Hence, the propriety of calling the blood of Christ the blood of God. "Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

The important sentiment above, is beautifully expressed in the nervous language of Dr. Young:

"Creation's great superior, man! is thine;
Thine is redemption—
Redemption! 'twas creation more sublime:
Redemption! 'twas the labor of the skies:
Far more than labor—it was death in heaven:
A truth so strange, 'twere bold to think it true,
If not far bolder still to disbelieve."

Well might the apostle exclaim, "O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." Man is bought off from the penal arm of the Adamic law: "The free gift has come upon all men unto justification of life." But though man has been thus redeemed from the curse of the Adamic law, he is "not without law to God;" he is under law to Christ; and though by the redeeming act, the salvation of all infants and idiots is sure, all rational adults must obey the law of Christ—the law of faith, without which they will fall under the penalty of the Gospel law, which is eternal death.

But Christ not only made an atonement for *original sin*, but, also, for all the *actual sins* of men; so that man, coming to him by faith, and confessing his sins, is forgiven; being "justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses;" thus we have peace with God, and receive the Spirit of adoption, enabling us to say, Abba Father; and being children of God, we become "joint heirs with Christ;" and by virtue of this joint heirship, are entitled to all the privileges of the natural sons. And

as all things were made by him, and *for him*, so, the apostle says, *all things are ours*, “things present, and things to come.”

But we learn, further, that the blood of the “Lamb of God” provides for the removal of the *pollution* of sin: “The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin.” We may, therefore, not only be restored to the *favor* of God, but, also, to his *moral image*. It is our privilege and duty to “leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection”—to be “*sanctified wholly*.” We rejoice that, so generally, an increasing interest is felt in the Church upon this important subject, and that so many living witnesses are being raised up to testify that “his blood cleanseth from all sin.” May the Lord increase this spirit of holiness more and more, “till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: from whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” When we have thus submitted to receive the full measure of Gospel blessing, and are cleansed from all sin, then, indeed, may we say, “Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

III. We proceed, in the third place, to *direct attention to this extraordinary personage*: “Behold the Lamb of God.” To behold him, implies that we believe on him—that we receive him in all his offices, as prophet, priest, and king: as a prophet, to teach the doctrines, to enforce the precepts, and to present the promises of the Gospel; as a priest, to offer all the privileges of the Gospel, pardon, holiness, and heaven; as a king, to provide laws, to command obedience, and enforce penalty.

But, to turn your attention more immediately to him : behold him in his humiliation in Bethlehem ! While the watchful shepherds were on the plains by night, a band of angels descended from the upper world, bearing themselves upon their golden pinions, while the glory of the Lord shone around : “ The angels said, Fear not, for, behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people ; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ, the Lord ; and this shall be the sign : ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger.” This announcement made the heavenly host break forth in a song of praise : “ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” Behold him, when but twelve years of age, sitting in the temple, asking questions and giving answers, to the astonishment of all ! Behold him, when engaged in his personal ministry, going from city to city, and from village to village, while everywhere the people were astonished at his divine and heavenly eloquence, saying, “ Never man spake like this man !” See him standing upon the mountain side, raising his hands and his voice, saying, “ Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest !” See him in the performance of his stupendous miracles—raising the dead, healing the sick, casting out devils, instructing the ignorant, doing every possible good to the souls and bodies of men !

Do you see him weeping at the grave of Lazarus, or seeking food upon the barren fig tree, or sleeping in the ship, or praying on the mountain ? In all these instances you see our “ elder brother.” Do you see him raising the dead—creating bread to feed the multitude—commanding the winds and the waves to be still, or walking upon the waters of the sea of Galilee ? In all these wonderful works you see the footsteps of the *mighty God*. In the one case you see *David’s son*, and in the other *David’s*

Lord. Well might the admiring apostle say, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

Behold him in the garden, agonizing, until his sweat became, as it were, great drops of blood! Hear him crying, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done!" Look away to Calvary! See him bearing his own cross to the place of execution! See the formidable host arrayed against him! Divine justice, with the penalty of the violated law—the priests and Levites—Pilate and the Roman soldiery—all drawn out in battle array; while Jesus, the "Lamb of God," met the host, by receiving the *curse* of the law in his own body. For three dreadful hours the conflict raged; and, behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom; the earth quaked, the rocks rent, the graves of many of the saints were opened, and the sun refused to shine. But in that hour, a voice was heard, saying, "IT IS FINISHED." Then Satan, like lightning, fell from his usurped throne; light broke upon our fallen world, and a flood of divine efficacy gushed from Immanuel's side, flowing back to the first transgression, and forward to the end of time, and swelling, on every side, to the utmost limit of human guilt.

But he was taken down from the cross and laid in a sepulchre; the stone at its mouth was sealed; a watch was set: all was fixed to the minds of his enemies, and the disciples were scattered. The powers of darkness seemed to enjoy a short triumph. But on the third morn, as the day began to dawn, "the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it; his countenance was like the lightning, and his raiment white as snow." The keepers became as dead

men; the pale monarch of the tomb could no longer hold his victim: Jesus came back to life—his almighty tread was heard upon the pavement of death—he burst the bands of the grave, and triumphed over it. Then might the inquiry be made, “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?” The mighty conqueror answers, “I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” He showed himself to his disciples; he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once. And after forty days he led them out to Bethany; and as he lifted up his hands to bless them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven out of their sight.

But he will come again at the end of the world, upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, when the righteous shall be placed on his right hand, and the wicked on his left; and then he shall say to those on his right, “Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” And to those on the left, “Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting punishment, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Let us turn aside, and see this great and awful sight, if our feeble faculties can endure the dreadful glory: All men shall be waked from their dusty beds, by the confused noise, and deafening roar of the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. The dead in Christ shall rise first, while the pious living shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; and then the saints of all ages shall be caught up with the Lord in the air; when, with his redeemed, he shall move heavenward in his triumphant chariot:

“Lo! self-moving, it drives on its pathway of cloud,” and, as it draws near the Celestial City, the charioteer calls out, in the triumphant language of the Psalmist,

"Lift up your heads, O, ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." The watchmen upon the walls of the New Jerusalem inquire, "Who is this King of glory?" The answer is: "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." Again the charioteer demands an entrance, when the gates of the heavenly city are lifted up, and the everlasting doors fly wide, and all the ransomed of the Lord enter the heavenly country shouting with loud voices, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the LAMB; for he is worthy." While all in heaven exclaim, "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God, and unto the LAMB, for ever and ever." Then the *Lamb* will lead them forth to fountains of living water, and they shall be permitted, hand in hand, to career through all the delightful regions of the heavenly country, shouting as they fly, "We are come, we are come!"

The Lord grant that we all may "*behold the Lamb*," believe on him, receive him, obey him, be sanctified by him, that we may be saved in his eternal kingdom, for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON XI.

BY REV. JAMES B. FINLEY

WOMAN'S GREATNESS.

"Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well," 2 Kings iv, 26.

THE history of Elisha the prophet is one of great interest. That he was a man of God is clearly demonstrated by the miracles which were wrought by him, and the events which he foretold, as narrated in his history given

by divine inspiration. He smites the Jordan with the mantle of Elijah, and its waves are divided; he casts salt into the spring at Jericho, and its waters are healed; he multiplies the widow's oil, and prophesies speedy relief to the famishing Samaritans; and is avenged by the Almighty for the insult cast on him by the children of wicked parents; and, even after his death, his bones quicken into life the dead body of the Moabite.

He was, evidently, called of God, and qualified for the work of a prophet; and in the discharge of this work, he gave evidence of his fidelity. Like his divine Master, he went about doing good—teaching the worship of the true God, in opposition to idolatry. In his journeyings, he often visited Shunam. This city was in the tribe of Issachar, at the foot of Mt. Tabor, at which place there was a school of the prophets. In his way, he passed by where lived “a great woman,” who was said to be the sister of Abishag, the Shunamite, well known in the history of David. It is this woman whom the prophet addresses in the text.

In considering this historical incident, let us inquire,

WHAT CONSTITUTES WOMAN'S TRUE GREATNESS?

1. *Woman is great in her relations.*

(1.) As a wife. The infinitely wise Jehovah, after he had made man in his own image, and stamped his nature with immortality, and clothed him in the innocence of holiness, saw it was not good for him to be alone. He, therefore, made for him a helpmate; not out of the dust of the earth, but of his own flesh and bone, thereby showing the relation in which she was to be regarded by man. Not out of his head to govern him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him; but from his side, near his heart, to be beloved and cherished as dearly as his own flesh, and that she might cherish and sustain him in the cares and toils of life. And as the current of life flows

through the heart to every part of the animal system, so the happiness and comfort of man, is, in a great measure, to flow through her whom God has given him to be his most intimate companion in life. She is the sacred depository of his affections, his interests, and his cares. As the guardian of all this sacred treasure, she is of inestimable value to him.

(2.) As mother, she has a stronger hold on the affections of the family than any other member, and around her all cluster. From her flows the milk of human kindness that nourishes every good passion of the human heart—softening the character, and influencing the destinies of her whole household. She is the leaven that leavens the whole lump.

(3.) She is rendered great in her relation to the world by her refined feelings, her moral courage, her unyielding attachment, her purity, and her relation to husband and children. In her are centred, to a great extent, the hopes and the happiness of the human family. It is with her to wield the destinies of families, neighborhoods, communities, and the world for weal or woe. She bears the most useful and responsible relation of any human being; and, holding so much in her hands, and at her disposal, she *must* be great for good, or great for evil.

2. *But woman's personal greatness must consist in her goodness.*

(1.) And first among the cardinal virtues of a good woman is *fidelity*. No accomplishments, no qualities whatever can make amends for the want of this. This fact is so self-evident, that it is only necessary to mention it. Nothing is more fatal to the happiness of families, or fraught with more disastrous consequences to society, than the infidelity of the wife and mother: and this is the only crime for which God will permit a man to forsake his wife.

(2.) The second virtue is *submission and obedience* to

her husband in all things lawful. Without this, she loses her place in the family circle, and disobeys the command and design of her Maker, who said, "Thy desire shall be unto thy husband, and he shall rule over thee;" "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and he is the Savior of the body. Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

(3.) *Humility* is a third virtue; and the wife or mother who possesses it is not dazzled with the foolishness which constitutes the glory of the vain and fashionable world; but is satisfied with the mild shades of virtue, and the charms which belong to her sex. She cheerfully complies with the direction of the apostle: "That women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered [or false] hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." She does not deform herself until her person becomes as offensive to good taste, as disgusting to the eyes of virtue and common sense; but moves in the dignity of her own gracefulness, wrapt in the garment of humility. In this attire, she attracts her whole household, and conforms them to her own lovely image and graces.

(4.) Again: *discretion* and *prudence* are important elements in female character, and fortify all the other virtues, and render them invulnerable. Conquest gained by force or art, must always be maintained by policy. The heart subdued by love, must be preserved by discretion and prudence. The dominion of youth and beauty is arbitrary and despotic, and, like other tyrannies, is seldom of long duration; but discretion and prudence will keep in subjection the unruly passions, and maintain a proper supremacy in the heart. Indeed, the exercise of these virtues becomes absolutely necessary in the relation of a wife and

mother. There is nothing more unsuitable to the character of a good wife and mother than an indecent carelessness, or fashionable levity. This folly has, within the last half century, grown to such a height, that all ages and relations have become so blended together in the fashionable world, that there is nothing to distinguish the mother or wife from the daughter or maid, but the furrows of age. O, how sickening to common sense, and repulsive to virtuous feeling! Truly the want of a sound discretion and prudence is the folly of the age.

(5.) But an *unfeigned affection* is the cementing virtue in the female character. It invigorates and sets the whole in motion, and attracts all within the domestic circle. Sanctified love, like a coat of mail, or a three-fold cord which cannot be broken, unites every virtue. It will insure fidelity, enforce obedience, and increase tenderness and devotion, so that every duty will be cheerfully and promptly performed. Such a woman will be to her family as a city set on a hill, or as the salt of the earth. Like the dew of heaven, her graces will water all the tender plants, and they will grow around the parent stem, as plants of the Father's right hand planting.

A good woman is the soul of her husband; his "heart doth safely trust in her." "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband, also, and he praiseth her." Her tenderness and sympathy lessen his sorrows, and increase his joys. Her affection cheers him on in the path of duty; her good humor and complacency lighten the cares and anxieties of life.

3. *Woman, to reach her highest elevation, must be TRULY PIOUS.* In speaking upon this point, let us notice the piety of the woman alluded to in the text.

(1.) Her piety was seen in honoring the Lord's prophet. "She said unto her husband, Behold, now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither." God has said, "He that honoreth me, him will I honor." She honored God by her kindness to his faithful prophet. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

(2.) Her piety was seen in her contentedness; for when the good man would have done her a favor, she desired it not. Elisha must have had great influence with Jehoram, the king, from the part he took, and the influence he exercised in the war with the Moabites; for, under God, the prophet was the instrument of his victory. Therefore, he asked her if she would be "spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?" As much as to say, "Do you wish an office for your husband, or a commission in the army? Do you wish to change your quiet, humble home, for the fashionable court, or the display of the camp?" O, how admirable is her answer. "And she answered, I dwell among mine own people." As much as if she had said, "I am perfectly satisfied and contented with my husband, as he is—with my home, humble as it is—with my neighbors and kinsfolk, as they are; nor do I desire *any* change." Here seems to be true contentment, and a perfect resignation to the will of God in the administration of his providence. How very different from too many, who are always repining. Their husbands do not do as they should. Their house, furniture, and clothes are not what they ought to be. Their neighbors move in better style than they—dress their children more gaily; in short, every thing is wrong. Peace and happiness have taken their flight, and discontent and murmuring reign. *Such a*

wife, instead of being the centre of affection, and a blessing to her husband and family, is just the reverse.

Dr. Clarke remarks on this passage: "How few are there like this woman? Who would not wish to be recommended to the king's notice, or procure a place for a relation in the army? Who would not like to change the country for the town, and the rough manners of the inhabitants of the villages, for the polished conversation and amusements of the court? Who is so content with what he has, as not to desire more? Who trembles at the prospect of riches, or believes there are any snares in an elevated state, or in the company and conversation of the great and honorable? How few are there who will not sacrifice every thing—peace, domestic comfort, and enjoyments, their friends, their consciences, and their God, for money, honors, grandeur, and parade?"

To be truly great, is to know God, to walk in the light of his countenance, and have daily fellowship with him—to have the approval of an enlightened conscience—to feel that it is well with the soul. The experimental knowledge this woman had of her acceptance with God, enabled her to say as respected herself, "*It is well.*" Her faith in God and her communion with her husband, enabled her to say, it was well with him; and, notwithstanding the very trying circumstances in which she was placed, in reference to her only little son, (who was dead,) yet she could say, it was well with him. Dr. Clarke remarks, "In her day, the doctrine of reprobate infants had not disgraced the pure religion of the God of endless compassion. She had no doubts concerning the welfare of her child, even with respect to another world; and who, but a Pagan, or a Stoic can entertain a contrary doctrine?"

And now, in conclusion, let me inquire of each, how stands this account with you? "*Is it well with thee?*" Have you been born of God's Spirit, and adopted into his

family? "Say unto the righteous, it shall be well with him; but woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him." Either, it is well with you, and God's blessing is upon you; or, it is ill, and his curse is this moment hanging over your devoted soul. Say, gay and fashionable lady, are you not, with all your dress and tinsel, hanging over the gulf of an eternal hell? Say, gay and careless wife, are not you and your husband walking hand in hand to taste eternal woe? Are you not training up your family to join you in that lake that burns with fire and brimstone; "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched?"

Awake! awake! now is the time to turn from your foolish parade and sinful indulgences, and to seek the Lord, that it may be *well with you and yours*. And then, in an humble retirement, far secluded from the public gaze, and from those useless and sinful pastimes which disgrace human nature, clad in modest attire, and in the panoply of your own virtues, amidst a contented and pious family, a truly great and good woman, moving in all the dignity and meekness of true piety, you may become a shining and burning light to all around you. Afflictions may, indeed, come upon you; death, even, may invade the family circle and snatch away the beloved child, still, with the composure and resignation of a sincere Christian, you will be enabled to say, "It is well with me, it is well with my husband, it is well with the child."

May God help all wives and mothers to "be in behavior as becometh holiness; not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the *young* women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

SERMON XII.

BY REV. NATHAN EMERY

CHRIST THE CHRISTIAN'S SAVIOR AND REWARDER.

"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people: to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious," Isaiah xi, 10.

THE revelation of divine benevolence to our fallen race commenced in the morning of time. Man had transgressed the law of his God, incurred his holy displeasure, forfeited his heavenly abode, and exposed himself to endless ruin. Remorse had laid hold of his conscience; fear had commenced its terrors in his guilty soul; justice was advancing, with slow and steady step, to cut the offender down. At this alarming crisis, "a ransom was found;" mercy came to his relief; and as the Almighty pronounced the curse on his deceiver, he made the following glorious declaration: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel!" This first promise made to man contained all the elements of the great system of salvation. It was renewed, at different times, to the pious patriarchs and prophets, who greatly rejoiced at the opening prospect of a glorious moral revolution in the world.

Divine providence saw that man was not prepared, at that time, to receive the splendors of the Gospel day; and that such was the darkened state of his understanding, and the depravity of his heart, that he would plunge into the most despicable idolatry: and, notwithstanding the high opinion man had of his own reason and intelligence, this, in the course of time, actually took place. The fathers of philosophy, the inventors of the fine arts, and the conquerors of the world, worshiped every thing as god but the true

God, and he was unknown to them. In view of this, the Lord saw fit to select Abraham and his descendants to be the repository of his word, and to perpetuate the worship of the true God in the world. The patriarch, therefore, was commanded to leave his country, his kindred, and his father's house, and to sojourn in a distant land; and, to cheer his heart under his privations, he had, in addition to other great promises, the following, which far exceeded all that were given him before: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." In this promise he had a glimpse of the Gospel era; and our Savior could properly observe to the Jews: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day." God saw fit to make a strong impression on the minds of the pious, that a great character would come, and do incalculable good on the earth. This subject had the pre-eminence in the minds of the prophets, who dwelt on the pleasing theme with joyful hearts and flowing eloquence. Isaiah seems to have been highly favored with a view of the "suffering of Christ, and the glory that would follow." He saw that long night of darkness and ignorance, which had enveloped our earth, give way before the rising glories of the Sun of righteousness. He heard the sound of the great trumpet, proclaiming a glorious jubilee to our world, declaring liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. In short, he saw the introduction of the Gospel into our world, its progress, and ultimate triumph. He represented its effects by the striking figure of ferocious and untamable animals becoming peaceful, and harmoniously dwelling together, declaring that nothing should hurt in all God's holy mountain. And this was to be accomplished by Him who should stand for an ensign for the people.

I. WE SHALL NOTICE THE PROMINENT DOCTRINES PRESENTED IN THE TEXT.

1. *The author of this great work is called the "root of*

Jesse." It is well understood that Jesse was of the tribe of Judah, and the father of David; and that the prediction was that our Savior would spring from this tribe and the family of David. So there can be no doubt that our text refers to Christ by any who believe in the divine inspiration of the holy Scriptures.

But a difficulty may arise in the minds of some, from the statement of the prophet in the first verse of this chapter. He observes, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse; and a branch shall grow out of his roots." They may not see how it is possible for Christ to be the root of Jesse; that is, the source from which Jesse came, and, at the same time, be a branch of Jesse; that is, one of Jesse's offspring. The same idea is advanced in Rev. xxii, 16: "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify these things in the Churches. I am the *root* and the *offspring* of David." It is remarkable how our Savior confounded his enemies by introducing this subject: "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How, then, doth David, in spirit, call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David called him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word." Were we unbelievers in the divinity of Christ, we should be as dumb, and as completely confounded, as were the Pharisees. But divine inspiration has given us a key which opens and explains the whole mystery. The sacred pages proclaim that He is the mighty God, the creator of all things in heaven and earth; therefore, he was the root, or creator, of Jesse and David; and that he was God manifested in the flesh. He took upon him human nature, was made of a woman, who descended from Judah, through the lineage of Jesse and David. Here

the whole mystery is opened, and we have a Redeemer presented to us, "Who is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him;" and on whom we are willing to risk our all for time and eternity. It is true, he was a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief. His enemies were many; they were mighty and malicious. His earthly friends were few and feeble; he had none of the riches of this world to recommend him; he was born in a stable, cradled in a manger; had not a place of his own where to rest his weary head, and finally died on a cross. Here unbelief scowls, and pride frets, at having such a Savior presented to man; but we can assure them that man did not need a Savior to recommend to him the riches and grandeur of the world, but just the reverse. He needed one to teach him that vanity is written on all earthly things, and that he makes a great mistake who lays up his treasure this side of heaven.

Notwithstanding no form or comeliness, by a haughty world, could be seen in Jesus, there is infallible evidence that he was the mighty God, wise in counsel, and mighty in works—that beams of divine glory often shone through his humanity while on earth, and that, from first to last, he proved himself to be the promised Savior. Earth took no interest in his birth, made no display of joy, illuminated no cities; but heaven did, and lit up the firmament with a new star, to point distant visitants to his lonely resting-place. Although man had no songs to sing on this great event, angels had; for they shouted their halleluiahs along the starry concave, while over the hills of Bethlehem, and down to the vales below, rolled their anthem of, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." He had no revenue, no store-houses, and yet a hungry multitude of five thousand men, besides women and children, "did all eat, and were filled," with five loaves and two fishes. When he wanted money to pay his

tribute, the sea quickly sent him a contribution in the mouth of a fish; the elements obeyed their Maker; winds and waves were silent, and still, at his rebuke; the deaf were made to hear the voice of him who spake and it was done; the dumb were brought to sing his praise, and the blind to see creation, and its Creator, both at once. Disease and demons fled before him, and death and the grave obeyed his word, and yielded up their prey. And, finally, the whole army of the prince of darkness was defeated, in the great battle fought at the death and resurrection of the Captain of our salvation. Then was bruised the head of the old serpent; death lost his power to sting the pious saint; and the grave was robbed of its boasted victory.

2. "*He shall stand for an ensign for the people.*" An ensign, banner, and standard, refer to the colors, or flag, borne by a nation, by which it is distinguished from others. Among the uses to which it is put, it is raised to assemble, or enlist soldiers, to direct them in their march, and encourage them in the conflict. It is not an uncommon figure in the sacred pages: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Here the Lord is represented as a mighty general, who raises his ensign, enlists and rallies his troops, and delivers his people.

The prophet very properly applies it to our Savior; for there is no other name given amongst men whereby we can be saved. To him we must all come—he is the centre to which we must all gravitate. In the days of his incarnation he stood forth in opposition to all the powers of earth and hell, and proclaimed to listening multitudes the evil nature of sin, the power and craft of their enemies, the danger of remaining in the broad road which leads to destruction. He invited them to enlist in his cause, to embrace his cross, and to be born of the Spirit; to be pure in heart, and holy in life. He lifted the curtain, and opened

a prospect beyond the horizon of time, and presented such glorious views of immortality as never had entered into the mind of man. After having finished the work he came to do on the earth, he gave up his life, and expired in one of the most painful forms that malignity could contrive. He satisfied divine justice, purchased pardon for a guilty world, proved himself to be the Lord of hosts, strong and mighty in battle, by "spoiling principalities and powers, making a show of them openly." He came back from the tomb, met his disciples, gave them all needful instructions, and committed the Gospel ensign to his apostles in the following charge: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." The apostles were soon endowed with power from on high, and commenced their work. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, "raised the broad flag of invitation," and three thousand came over on the side of Immanuel. From that time to the present it has been raised to invite the nations to come to Christ and live; and every true minister can say:

"See on the mountain top,
The standard of our God;
In Jesus name I lift it up,
All stain'd with hallow'd blood."

The followers of Christ have crosses to bear, losses to sustain, and enemies to contend with. "Legions of wily fiends oppose," as they advance toward the prize of their high calling. The arm of God is their strength, his word their guide—his promise gives animation to hope, and energy to faith. The love of Christ warms their hearts, and creates their zeal. Let them hold fast to their standard, in all their conflicts, and, with the pious apostle, they can say, "In all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us, and gave himself for us."

3. *The conditions of salvation as presented in the text.* "Unto him shall the Gentiles seek." It is well known that Jews and Gentiles had an inveterate prejudice against each other. This grew out of the ceremonial law, which the apostle calls, "The law of commandments contained in ordinances." This middle wall of partition, which was such a formidable bar between them, Christ removed out of the way, "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross," so that all might see that the handwriting was effaced, and know that the law was disannulled. This was done "that he might reconcile both to God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." These obstacles being removed, such as were enemies could become friends, enlist under the same banner, contend together with the enemies of God and man, and walk together in the way of holiness.

The prophet, in stating that the Gentiles would seek the Savior presented to them in the Gospel, supposes that there are conditions to be complied with; and that the Gentiles who would not submit to the "law of commandments contained in ordinances," could have no reasonable objections to the conditions on which salvation was offered to them in the Gospel, therefore, would obey the command, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found." In order that every thing might be done consistent with the perfections of God, and the moral agency of man, the holy Comforter was sent to "reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." The dark chambers of the human soul must be irradiated by the light of divine truth. Man must see his real condition. He must see that he is a sinner, and justly deserves to be left to sink into interminable ruin. He must give up the tinsel robe of self-righteousness which he has drawn so nicely around

him; and, so far from hoping for heaven on the ground of any virtue or goodness of his own, he must see that he is a guilty rebel, who has committed treason against heaven—that he is helpless, “having no hope, and without God in the world.” But although your sins may rise like mountains, your heart resemble the hardest marble, the law pronounce its curse, and conscience condemn you to die, you may approach him who “bore our sins and carried our sorrows,” and venture all upon his merits. Yes, go to Calvary, and behold your Redeemer nailed to the cross—suspended between heaven and earth—stained with blood, and pale with death—surrounded by a railing, mocking multitude; and though ready to think that compassion has taken its departure from the world, here you will behold it as never seen before, dilating the bosom, and overflowing the heart of the suffering Son of God. Hear him say, “This cup I drink for you,” then will you exclaim,

“I yield, I yield!
I can held out no more;
I sink, by dying love compell’d,
And own thee conqueror.”

Faith claims his merits; your sins and chains fall off; the sentence of condemnation is reversed; darkness and discord take their departure from your trembling soul on speedy wing; your heart is melted into love to God and man; your eyes overflow with tears of gratitude and joy, and you exclaim, “O, Lord, I will praise thee; for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.” We wish not to convey the idea that the experience of every individual is precisely alike: some have more terrors than others, and the enjoyment and assurance are greater in some than in others; but we wish to be understood to say, that all brought to enjoy pardon are fully convinced of their sinful and helpless condition prior to their conversion; that, when brought to feel

that mercy has come to their relief, they can testify that they are *sinner saved by grace*.

"If we are saved by grace," says an objector, "I see no need of conditions. Christ hath died for all, and he will save all. Let man live as he pleases, he is sure of heaven." If this objection is correct, a man may live like a brute, and die in the act of murder, or any other crime, and enter safely into the rest of the saints. Before the coming of our Savior, the Gentiles had much of what they called religion, and were very zealous in their way; but the apostle calls it "abominable idolatry." It contained neither holiness, nor the worship of the true God. If the objection be true, our Savior and his apostles have introduced a system of religion but little better. They have, indeed, left out the extravagances of heathen worship; but have brought us a religion as destitute of piety, as was that of the "great Diana of the Ephesians;" for it supposes that repentance, faith, and holiness, as well as the worship of the true God, are not necessary to man's salvation. So the Gospel has thrown down heathenism, and introduced no religion in its place, or none of any importance; for men will all be saved, though they disregard and trample on all its obligations. But this is not all: it supposes that the God of glory is an accomplice with the powers of darkness, and an abettor of sin. He has, indeed, done much for fallen man. The whole system of salvation is crowded with blessings for a lost world; and for what purpose? According to the above opinion, it is that man may have the opportunity of immersing himself in sin during his life on earth, and rising to heaven after death. So that the cross is made the encourager of sin—God gave up his Son to die, to purchase indulgences for man to commit crimes; and in the last and great day of decision, will say to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord." We have no disposition to pursue

this subject any further. Our earnest wish is, that its abettors may see their errors, and fly to Him who hath said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;" and, by his inspired apostle, has proclaimed, "Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord."

Christ hath laid down the price of our salvation, and fixed the conditions on which we shall have it; and no man can justly say, they are unreasonable. Is it not reasonable for the needy beggar to reach out his hand to receive your charity? Is it not reasonable that rebels should throw down their weapons of rebellion, in order to have a pardon? And would not a governor be thought to be on the borders of insanity, who should pardon men while in the act of murder and destruction? And is it not unreasonable for man to reject the provision in the Gospel, made for him by the infinite love of God, and the merits of Christ? The Lord thinks it is, and gives such to understand, that they shall not taste of his supper. But the humble, pious souls, who have given up all for Christ—who have their affections set on things above, and rejoice that the way of holiness is the way to heaven, will find

4. *His rest glorious.* The happiness of God's people is often mentioned in the sacred Scriptures by the term *rest*. And it is not uncommon to apply it to their comforts in this life. The blessed Savior promises rest to the souls of the weary and heavy-laden who come unto him; and the apostle Paul observes, "We who have believed, do enter into rest." Notwithstanding they live in a world subject to many vicissitudes and conflicts, they have what may be properly called a rest. They rest from the labors and toils those perform who still walk in the way of the ungodly. Sin gives no peace to its votaries. "The way of transgressors is hard." They, having left its service, have nothing to do with its toils. They are freed from the stings of a guilty conscience. "There is, therefore,

now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." They have entered into sweet communion with the Lord; and the closer they cleave to him, the more heavenly is their rest. Let them struggle for holiness, believe the divine promise, and feel the yoke of inbred sin destroyed: then can they use the triumphant language of the apostle, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This is the glorious privilege of the children of God in this world.

But the words of our text refer to that rest which shall be given them when they receive an honorable discharge from conflict and war. In this state of probation, they have to use all their strength and grace to overcome enemies, and advance in the divine life. Here, they have to sustain losses and disappointments—their nearest friends are taken from them by the cold hand of death. It is not uncommon for gloomy poverty to make their dwellings its abode, and disease to shatter their earthly tabernacles; or, for children and friends to cause unspeakable anguish, by walking the downward way to death. In addition to all this, they have to contend with principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world. Their hearts are often dilated with sighs, and their path bedewed with tears. But, O, that "sweet home"—that *heavenly rest*, which God has prepared for his people! What shall I say of it? Language fails in description—human intellect cannot grasp it. Imagination soars on trembling wing, only to be lost in its glories. Divine inspiration has given us a glimpse of it, by using the most grand and lofty figures of which our language is capable. The heavens are opened—the vail removed—a city of vast dimensions and indescribable glory is presented to our enraptured view. The most precious stones compose its walls; its gates are pearls; its streets are paved with gold; the fluent waters

of life from the throne of God roll through its midst, on either side of which, trees of life wave their ambrosial tops, scattering their life-giving fragrance—yielding, monthly, their various fruits, while their leaves give health to the nations. None of the feebleness of infancy, nor trembling of old age will ever be seen there. Sickly forms and funeral processions will never walk its golden pavements. Its inhabitants bloom with perpetual youth. Their robes of white testify their purity, their waving palms declare their victory, and their flowing anthem “to Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,” proclaims how they came to be admitted there. And what is infinitely above all, is, the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are their temple, and the divine glory makes their eternal day. This is the heaven that God has prepared for his people—the glorious “rest” spoken of in our text—so glorious, that it needs the language of eternity to portray it.

II. WE WILL NOW DEDUCE A FEW PRACTICAL INFERENCES.

1. We infer, *that the Gospel is a glorious system of benevolence, sent by God to fallen man.* It is designed to meet all his real wants, and bring him up to a state of holiness on earth, and, thereby, prepare him to become a citizen of the New Jerusalem. It finds him ignorant and bewildered: it pours light into his understanding, and points him to the good and right way. He has a depraved disposition, which, like a hot-bed, is the fruitful source of sin against God: it presents to him the great expiatory sacrifice offered on the cross for his deliverance; brings him the grace of God to “prevent him that he may have a good will, and work with him when he has that good will.” In short, it finds him destitute of all good, and infinitely in arrears to divine justice, and offers him pardon, holiness, and heaven. Let the news be spread to the most distant region of human society. Let Ethiopia stretch out her

hands to God ; he will receive her with the same complacency he did the returning prodigal, and give her a place in the family circle. Let the Gospel ensign be carried in triumph round the globe. Let all pray, and all labor to help on the grand design, until the hosannas of the islands, and the halleluiahs of the continents ascend, forming one glorious anthem before the throne.

2. We infer, *that it is the duty of all to comply with the call of God, and submit to the conditions presented in the Gospel.* This is perfectly reasonable ; and yet there are thousands in our country who conduct as though they were sent here for no higher purpose than the animals which graze on the mountains. The whole of their thoughts and anxieties are confined to the fading things of earth. They say they “ mean to be religious at a future period ;” as if they had life and reason, time and grace at their own disposal—as if they were masters, and the Lord their servant, and were at liberty to attend to his call when it might suit their convenience. This, sinners, is the story you have been repeating for years, and which, I fear, you will continue to repeat, until your tongues are silent in death, and your spirits are imprisoned with the damned. O, there is an awful period fast approaching, when you will be stretched on your couch for the last time, with disease preying upon your vitals, and fever flaming through your veins ; your weeping friends gathering around you, a guilty conscience within, spreading terror through your souls, an angry God above you, a fearful day of judgment before you, and a dreadful hell beneath you. Then you must take the unwilling plunge which will bring you into the presence of a slighted, rejected, and offended God. But now, while you have time—while the inviting voice of mercy is sounding in your ears, escape for your life—delay not another minute. In the name of Heaven, I warn you not to leave the place where you are until you make the firm resolve, that, in the

strength of God, you will now seek your salvation. O, think! the disease which will drag you to the tomb, may have secretly commenced on your system—death may be very near. O, then, begin now; let your next breath be a prayer to the Lord for mercy; and continue to look to him until you know what that religion is, which will make life joyful, death a scene of triumph, and heaven your eternal home. O, my heavenly Father, bless this exhortation, to all to whom it may come. Let this feeble effort wake up some careless soul who is on the margin of destruction.

3. We infer, *that Christians have entered into a sacred covenant with the Lord to be his soldiers—his followers.* Not like that of a hireling, which comes to an end; but for ever—

“When rolling years shall cease to move.”

God has given them great and precious promises, that they may be made partakers of the divine nature, and, being delivered out of the hand of their enemies, may serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of their lives. He hath raised the curtain, and given them a distant view of that glorious country to which they will be transplanted, when the warfare is accomplished. This world is the field of battle and conflict. Here, we must have, and faithfully use the Gospel armor. And it should be our great concern, to be ready to meet all the emergencies to which we are exposed. In order to this, the enemies within must be destroyed, the carnal mind must be crucified, and the love of Christ control all our powers and passions. O, then, let us struggle for this without ceasing. Let us go to his throne of grace, presenting, by faith, the blood which cleanses from all sin; assured he will not deny us the blessing which that blood was shed to procure for us.

Let us be armed with the whole panoply of God, “praying always, with all prayer and supplication, and watching thereunto with perseverance;” always bearing in mind,

that if we would *conquer* we must *fight*. Our elder brethren, who have entered the celestial world, were once soldiers, fighting the same enemies we have to contend with, but are now waving their palms of victory before the throne. O, let us follow our "ensign," cling to the *cross*, and we shall soon be led from the field of battle in triumph, and enter into that glorious rest, where we shall join our sainted friends, who fought and conquered before us. There we shall have a sun without a cloud, a day without night, and life without death.

"Farewell, fellow-soldiers, you'll soon be discharged."

Amen, halleluiah !

SERMON XIII.

BY REV. DANIEL M. CONANT.

SELF-DENIAL.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself," Luke ix, 23.

Few precepts in the Bible are more important than the one contained in the text, and few, perhaps, are less regarded. At the time it was delivered, Christ had just revealed himself to Peter, and the rest of his disciples, in his true character ; and, lest they should be too much elated with their near alliance to so great a personage, and should conclude that their whole life would be attended only with pomp and grandeur, he informed them that "the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and be slain." As much as though he had said to them, you must prepare for a scene far different from what you have anticipated. Our Lord, however, added, for their support and encouragement, under this gloomy prospect, that the third day he would rise again ;

and then, properly to prepare them for the trials which awaited them, "He said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself."

Let us consider,

I. WHAT IS IMPLIED IN THE DOCTRINE OF SELF-DENIAL.

In explaining and enforcing this important doctrine, I shall endeavor to show the truth of Isaiah's words, "*The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint;*" or, that the understanding is darkened, the memory impaired, as to spiritual things; the will rebellious, the conscience stupified and blinded, the affections alienated from God, and all the passions in a state of anarchy and confusion. But, to be more explicit:

1. In matters of religion, we must not trust to our own understanding, but submit our short-sighted reason to the light of divine revelation. The reason which we assign for this is, that religion, though not contrary to reason, is above reason; or, in the language of Mr. Burr, "Natural understanding is not sufficient to determine in matters of religion." Here we may trace infidelity to its fountain-head: it is a pride in the understanding; an unwillingness to submit to the teachings of God, which makes some persons esteem themselves so wise that they reach that height of folly at which they deny the existence of God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. Well may we, with St. Paul, inquire, "Where is the wise? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" And St. James justly observes, that the "wisdom" of the natural man "descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish;" while St. Paul positively declares, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him." We confess that reason wonderfully guides some through the circle of the sciences, and the maze of commercial, or political affairs; "For the children of this world are, in

their generation, wiser than the children of light." But when it would lead us in search of divine truth, without the aid of revelation, it sheds but a faint and uncertain light. We have not said, nor would we be understood to say, that we must not exercise our reason on religious subjects. This God requires: "Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord;" but what we wish to be understood to say, is, that mere human reason is utterly unable to attain to any certain knowledge of God, or his law; "For the world, by wisdom, knew not God." Our ideas respecting the origin of evil, and the cause of the depravity and misery which actually exist among mankind, or the nature and worship of God, and of the immortality of the soul, must have remained dark, confused, and imperfect, if God had not made a revelation of himself. It is one thing to perceive that the rules of life which are laid before us are agreeable to reason, and another to discover them by the mere light of reason.

2. And has our memory escaped unimpaired by the fall? Alas! let us but consider how easily we forget the favors of our Creator, and recollect the injuries of our fellow-creatures; how little we retain of a good book, or pious discourse, and how much of a play, or of a frivolous conversation; with how much accuracy we remember an invitation to a scene of festivity, whilst the moving invitations of the Gospel are no sooner heard than forgotten. There is truth in the quaint remark, that "the memory loses, like a sieve, the living water of truth, and drinks in, like a sponge, the muddy streams of vanity;" and, as the knowledge we treasure up in the memory will have an important influence upon our hearts and lives, we should be careful what we see, and hear, and read; especially should we be cautious how we associate with the wicked. How appropriate the exhortation of the apostle: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

What an important injunction! but how little observed, even by those who are, in other respects, conscientious Christians? Lest, however, we should misunderstand the caution, let it be observed, that to “come out,” and be “separate,” does not imply that we are to have no dealings with unconverted men; for then we must needs, as the apostle says, “*Go out of the world;*” nor that we are not to be courteous and friendly to all; but it does imply that the Christian can have no profitable intercourse with the unrighteous beyond what absolute duty requires. The apostle then adds, “Wherefore, come out from among them, and be separate, saith the Lord, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, saith the Lord Almighty.” Is it not, therefore, plain, that the only ground on which God will receive us, and be our father, is, that we keep from an intimate association with the irreligious, when there is no necessity—no providential call, that requires it? And what will be the consequence, if we do not come out from amongst the unholy, but continue a familiar intercourse with them? It will fill our minds with their foolish conversation and vain deportment; and thus dampen our zeal for God, and cool that fervency of spirit which attended our first love, enabling us to say, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.” This is an important branch of self-denial, and should be neglected by none who would grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth.

3. We must deny, or, rather, renounce our own will; that is, we must bring it into submission to the will of God. Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we must do all to the glory of God. “If thine eye be single,” says the Redeemer: that is, if thy intentions are simply to please God, “thy whole body,” all thy actions, “shall be full of light,” shall be in accordance with the Gospel, which is called light; “But if thine eye be evil,” if thy

intentions be diverted any other way, "thy whole body"—all thy actions, "shall be full of darkness," unprofitable, and unworthy the least reward. Our will, in general, is full of obstinacy: we must have our own way, right or wrong, though the will of God is the supreme, unalterable rule of action for every intelligent creature. But the true, self-denying Christian can say, "Good is the will of the Lord;" or, with the blessed Redeemer, "Father, not my will, but thine be done."

4. And do we find conscience always faithful and true? Alas, how often is it said, even by those who are guilty of some act expressly forbidden in the word of God, "My conscience does not condemn me." Conscience, unenlightened by the Spirit and truth of God, is but a blind guide, which will "*strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.*" At one time, it is easy under accumulated guilt, and, at another, it is quite scrupulous about mere trifles! I readily admit that we should do nothing contrary to the decisions of conscience; but, then, we should be extremely careful to know that conscience is illuminated by the word of truth. A conscience renewed by grace, and directed by the word of God, is the best security for virtue, and the most awful avenger of wicked deeds.

5. And have not our affections, by the fall, been thrown into a state of anarchy and confusion? Awful thought! Our unrenewed affections are set not on righteousness, the greatest good; but on sin, the greatest evil: not on God, nor on what would improve, purify, and save the soul; but on what will gratify the body—on this world, its riches, ease, luxury, and friendship! St. Paul, in giving directions to Timothy, says, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." Then, if any man will follow Christ, he must deny his inordinate love of riches; for "They that

will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition;" "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Listen, for a moment, to the language of prosperity: "I will pull down my barns, and will build greater;" a resolution applauded by the world; "And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." True, there are many whose covetousness is not thus clearly manifested, but yet sufficiently marked to show that there treasure is not in heaven. A man need not plunge into the ocean in order to drown himself: a very shallow stream will suffice, if he choose to lie prostrate in it; so an inordinate desire for the smallest gain, may as certainly "drown the soul in perdition," as if the object of pursuit were the "whole world." "If ye, then, be risen with Christ," or, if you would be a Christian, "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.'

Does one say, I am quite content with what I have? Still you may "love the world." The *rich man*, denominated by Christ a fool, said, "*Soul, take thine ease;*" and yet he was introduced by our Lord with this solemn warning: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." Let an agent for some charitable enterprise approach one of those contented ones asking aid; no matter how important his mission, excuse after excuse will show that his contentment depends on his keeping his property entire. "A heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray." This brings me to another thought: a Christian is not to seek riches that he may live in idleness. This

was the iniquity of Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and *abundance of idleness*." "Six days shalt thou labor," is the command of God. Every Christian should feel the force of the apostolic injunction, "Not slothful in business;" and that of our Discipline, "be diligent. Never be unemployed, never be triflingly employed, never trifle away time."

Does another say, I am not anxious to be rich, nor am I indolent? This may be true, and yet there may be a guilty love of self, which seeks indulgence in the *luxuries* of life. Pleading a thousand plausible excuses suggested by the deceitful enemy, or by a deceitful heart, you may be expending in dress, furniture, and the luxuries of the table, nearly all you have; so that but little is left for the cause of Christ. You may be a Dives, in his mansion, clothed in purple, and faring sumptuously every day, while the cause of Christ, Lazarus-like, lies at your gate, and fed only with the crumbs which fall from your table. Let us consider,

II. THE UNIVERSALITY AND REASONABLENESS OF SELF-DENIAL.

I have been endeavoring to describe to you, my brethren, the nature of that self-denial which the Redeemer represents as inseparably connected with his service. And the doctrine of Christ, like its blessed author, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; what he said unto one, he said unto all, "*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself.*" And I now call upon you, as you would not deceive yourselves with the shadow, instead of the substance, to examine, seriously and diligently, into your experience on this matter; to inquire whether you have denied self or not. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." And is it

not reasonable in itself, that the Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer of the world, the Father and Friend of mankind, should be the object of our supreme delight, and that we should live to glorify him, doing *his* will in all things? And as “no man can serve two masters,” we should deny self that we may serve the Lord. Is it unreasonable that we should deny “*the desire of the eye*”—the pleasing of the eye of the body, or of the mind, with any forbidden object, that we may behold, “as in a glass, the glory of the Lord,” and that God may shine into “our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ;” that we should deny “*the desire of the flesh*”—the unlawful gratification of sense, of appetite, or of passion, that we may “labor for that meat which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you;” that we should deny “*the pride of life*,” the pomp, show, and glitter of the present world, that we may enjoy the dignity, glory, and felicity of our rational and immortal natures? And since that consecration of ourselves to God, in soul and body—in heart and life, embracing the doctrine of self-denial, is a service so reasonable in itself, and so necessary for us, it appears to be a matter of important inquiry, what will most encourage us in the performance of our duty. Let us, then, present

III. A FEW CONSIDERATIONS, AS MOTIVES TO SELF-DENIAL.

Various reasons could be suggested to excite to this duty; but we shall present but few. The first thing that we would present for consideration is, “*Ye are not your own.*” The meaning of this expression is; ye do not belong to yourselves—are not at your own disposal—have no right to do what you please with your souls, or bodies, or any thing you call your own; or to use any faculty, member, or talent, merely to gratify your own will or pleasure. The reason is, we did not create ourselves; but He, who is

the fountain of life, himself uncreated and self-existent, "formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." Nor can we preserve ourselves. We are dependent on God for the continuance of life, and for the use of all our faculties; "for in him we live, and move, and have our being." Still, these are not the reasons assigned by the apostle. He has given another: "*Ye are bought with a price.*" We had sinned, and thereby become "carnal, sold under sin;" that is, sold as a slave, to remain under the dominion of sin, until brought "by grace, through faith," "into the glorious liberty of the children of God." In reference to the price paid: "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things; but with the precious blood of Christ," "who gave himself a ransom for all." Yes, the Redeemer "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." And "it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through *sufferings.*"

Let us, then, consider, in the next place, the sufferings of Christ for us. "*For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.*" His parents were poor, laboring people, and his birth-place was a stable. He supported himself by manual labor, until he entered on his public ministry; after which he was supported by his friends. He suffered *reproach*. Isaiah had foretold that he should grow up as a tender plant, "*despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;*" and the prediction was literally fulfilled. He was respected, it is true, by a few humble followers, until one turned traitor, and by a few poor women from Galilee; but the rich, the great, and the learned, together with those in authority, in Church and

state, reproached and despised him. His own countrymen tauntingly said, "Is not this the carpenter—the son of Mary?" "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" "For out of Galilee riseth no prophet;" "He hath spoken blasphemy;" "And they cried out, all at once, saying, Away with this man, crucify him, crucify him." Well did the apostle say, "He endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." *His mental sufferings were great.* "And Jesus took with him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." An awful moment of conflict, between dread amazement and untold sorrow on the one hand, and a desire to glorify God and save mankind on the other. And so great was his agony, "his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground." He, also, suffered pain of body. What part of his body was free from pain? His back? The scourges make long furrows there! His head? The thorns pierce his sacred temples! His hands, or feet? They are torn with nails. He suffered *death*—even death upon the *cross*. No wonder all nature sympathized. "The vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened." O, my soul, was it for me the Redeemer suffered this? and shall I not joyfully deny myself, and, if need be, suffer the loss of all things, to please him?

But if the sufferings of Christ will not induce you to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus," let us contemplate the *happy consequences of suffering with Christ*; for if we suffer with him, we shall, also, be glorified together. And "I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are *not worthy to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us." We are expressly told by the Lord, that "every one that hath forsaken houses, or

brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for" his "names' sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." If, then, any suffer the loss of property or friends in consequence of self-denial, they "*shall receive a hundred-fold,*" even in this present world, in the inward satisfaction and divine consolation attending real religion; and they shall "*inherit everlasting life;*" they shall enjoy to all eternity that unspeakable felicity and glory which God has prepared for those that love and serve him. What, if in consequence of living "soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," we should suffer "the loss of all things" that the carnal heart desires, if thereby we "may win Christ," "and be found in him, having the righteousness which is of God by faith," and become inheritors of eternal life; shall not our gain be infinite? How inconsistent, then, the conduct of those who know and acknowledge that here they have "no continuing city," and yet set their affections on things present, which perish in the using, and are as full of care and anxiety about the things of this world, and as eager in their pursuit, as if they were their only portion, and they were to enjoy them for ever!



SERMON XIV

BY REV. ROBERT O. SPENCER.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup," 1 Cor. xi, 28.

OF all the institutions connected with our holy religion, no one is more important than the eucharist, or what is commonly called the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Indeed, in whatever light it may be viewed, whether as a

privilege, through which the most important and invaluable blessings are communicated to those who properly observe it, or as a duty enforced by the most solemn considerations, it stands pre-eminent. By the truly pious, in every age and country, it has justly been held in the highest estimation and reverence, being viewed as an all-important means of grace. It comes to us sanctioned by the remembrance of generations, during which it has been kept alive and observed in the Christian Church. It comes to us associated with the names of confessors and martyrs, who have honored it with their presence, and consecrated it with their blood. But its importance is enhanced from the consideration, that it was ordained by Christ himself to celebrate the most extraordinary event that ever occurred—an event which excited the admiration of angels, namely, the redemption of the world from sin, and all its dreadfully fatal consequences, by his own sufferings and death; and it was instituted, too, under circumstances the most tragical. It was on the eve of his own sufferings: his ministry was now drawing to a close; his enemies had formed the malignant purpose of his death; Judas was already engaged in the work of treason, and the high priests and the people were thirsting for his blood; yet the blessed Savior, ever intent on the happiness of his people, provides for them a sacred entertainment, and authoritatively puts forth this, his last, his dying command, “Do this in remembrance of me.” It is not, then, to be wondered at, that when gross abuses had crept into the Corinthian Church in reference to this holy ordinance, St. Paul should be so solicitous to correct them, chiding with severity those who were addicted to them, but urging those who loved the Lord Jesus Christ to a suitable attendance upon it: “Let a man,” says he, “examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.”

In the further prosecution of this subject, we shall consider,

I. THE NATURE AND DESIGN OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

1. In reference to the *nature* of this great and important rite of Christianity, various opinions have been entertained; some interpreting literally what can only be metaphorically understood, holding the monstrous theory, that the bread and wine are converted into the body and blood of Christ; and thus reducing it to a carnal ordinance; others contending that they are mere signs of the absent body and blood of Jesus, and the use of them intended to be only a religious commemoration of his death. Both of these views are erroneous, and equally to be deprecated. The former is revolting to the senses and reason of mankind, requiring us to apprehend what is impossible in the very nature of things, that the body of Christ was eaten by his eleven disciples, while their Lord was yet alive, and present with them, or that, at the same time, he was both dead and alive. Had his body thus been disposed of by his disciples, it could not have been betrayed by Judas, or crucified by the Jews. Nor can Christians partake, carnally, of the body of Christ; such having passed through a great and glorious change prior to his ascension to heaven, and being immutable; and, even were it possible for them thus to partake of the flesh of Christ, it could be of no conceivable benefit to them, it being declared by our Lord himself, as given by John, "the flesh profiteth nothing;" doubtless intending to remove the carnal meaning put upon his words by the Jews—he having previously said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Besides, it is evident that our Lord availed himself of a figure of speech common in that day, and frequently used in Scripture, of giving to the sign the name of the thing signified: thus, "The seven kine are

(represent) seven years;" "This is (represents) the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt;" "The ten horns are (signify) ten kings;" "That rock was (represents) Christ." In like manner, in our times, the sign is frequently spoken of as the thing signified: as, for instance, referring to a bust of Washington, we say, "This is Washington;" to an engraving of the battle of New Orleans, "This is the battle of New Orleans."

The latter view is, doubtless, in fault, in that it comes short, and attaches too little importance to the institution, regarding it simply as a ceremonial observance, and of no special advantage, further than to produce in our minds religious reflections and virtuous purposes. But what, then, is the nature of this institution? If we have thought correctly, it is not only a commemorative rite, but a commemorative sign and seal of the covenant of our redemption, and is to be regarded as an ordinance of the highest importance and perpetual obligation; being intended as a means—a most sacred means, of communion with the Savior, showing forth not only his death, but his continued spiritual presence with his Church. And that this is a correct view of the subject will appear by further considering,

2. *The design of the ordinance.* Having the spiritual and eternal welfare of mankind, and especially of his people in view, Christ not only died for them to secure their salvation, but instituted his supper to perpetuate a public exhibition of his sufferings and death, and the benefits to be derived from them in the Church till his second coming. Clearly as these subjects are revealed in the Scriptures, and frequently as they are dwelt upon in the pulpit, such is the perverseness of human nature, and so far gone from original righteousness are mankind, that they need something to direct their attention to them, and impress them with a sense of their transcendent importance. With

this view, believers are required to celebrate publicly the supper, which is a standing admonition to mankind of these facts, and an inexpugnable proof of the authenticity of the Christian religion; showing forth, as it does, continually, his death until his coming again. The word, in the original expression of its design, is *χαταγγελλετε*, and signifies, ye show it forth with approval and trust, or confidence. The cross of Christ was peculiarly obnoxious to the Jews, because they looked for a temporal prince and Savior, and trusted through him to receive universal dominion. It was to the Greeks foolishness, because the doctrine of man's justification and salvation by it was opposed to every notion that they had formed of what was dignified and philosophic. The wisdom of this world, and the princes of it, judged it absurd to expect salvation by one who was unable to save himself, and honor by one who died as a malefactor; and turned it to the reproach of Christians, that they were the disciples of one who was accursed of God and man: but they, by receiving the emblems of his death, were solemnly to declare, that they do not reckon the cross of Christ any reproach to Christianity, and that, so far from being ashamed of it, and desirous to conceal it, that, whatever constructions an irreligious and unbelieving world may put upon it, to them it is "the wisdom of God, and the power of God:" it is all their salvation, and all their desire. Thus they were to despise the shame attached to the cross of Christ, and even glory in it, as the means by which the world is crucified to them, and they unto the world, and esteeming its reproach as greater honor than all the applause of men. And, farther, by this they were to profess their entire dependence upon, and affiance in, the atonement of Christ, as amply sufficient to procure their present and eternal salvation. As they are not ashamed to acknowledge him as their only ground of hope, through whose name alone is salvation, so they are not

afraid to venture their interests, both for time and eternity, with him, believing that all power in heaven and in earth is committed to him, and that he is abundantly able to save to the uttermost all who put their confidence in him. Indeed, he is all their trust, and all their hope. Through his mercy and grace alone, do they expect help in every hour of need, victory in death, and an abundant entrance into the mansions of bliss. And, confident that he will never leave nor forsake them, they deliberately, and of choice, put themselves under the protection of his government, and the influence of his grace, and the guidance and agency of his Holy Spirit.

Another, and no less important design of Christ, in instituting his supper, was to present to his people a memorial of him. This interpretation our Lord himself gave of it when he said, "Do this in remembrance of me," *εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀναμνησιν*. Do it for my memorial. It is true, that upon every thing visible and invisible a part of his name divinely stands. In the small and in the great, in the near and in the remote, is seen the impress of his wisdom and power. But this is a memorial peculiarly his own, exhibiting, in transcendent lustre, his amazing love—his stupendous compassion. It is in this ordinance that he has emphatically recorded his name for ever—his whole name throughout all generations. He that instituted it, did, as it were, in plain and legible characters, to be read of all men, engrave this upon it for a motto: "When this you see, remember me." And ought they not to remember him in his ineffable condescension and unparalleled humiliation? O, yes, if there had been no love burning in the bosom of the Redeemer to our ruined world, he had never suffered—he had never died. Now this love of the blessed Jesus is to be particularly remembered by us in all its spirituality, in all its disinterestedness, and in all its various

characteristics. And where can this be done so effectually as at his table—whilst being presented with the emblems of his death? The breaking of the bread is well calculated to exhibit his body bruised for sin, and the pouring out of the wine, the shedding forth of his blood as a sacrifice for iniquity. But is there any danger of our forgetting him? Alas, our ungrateful hearts are but too apt to be unmindful of the richest mercies, and lose sight of the Lord that bought us. The pleasures and allurements of the world, valueless as they are, too frequently draw off our minds from him who gave his life a ransom for us. Hence, in consideration of the treachery of our memories, this ordinance is appointed to remind us of Christ, his sufferings and death, with the benefits procured thereby, that we may love him with an undivided heart, and serve him with an unwavering mind.

Again: it was intended to be a seal of his covenant—the new covenant in his blood with his people. Did God enter into a covenant with Abraham, and give him the seal of circumcision as a pledge of the fulfillment of it? So Christ has entered into a most gracious covenant with his people, and given this ordinance as a seal to ratify or confirm it. Its internal seal, as given to genuine believers, is the spirit of promise whereby they are sealed to the day of redemption. But the visible seal of it, as administered in the visible Church, is the supper. But of what is it a pledge? On the part of God, it is an earnest of his giving us pardon of sins, adopting us into his family, acknowledging himself to be our God, and agreeing to protect and support us in all trials, succor us in all temptations, comfort us in all troubles, supply all our wants, and conduct us through all the intricate paths of life to an ever-blessed state of being. On the part of the pious, it is a token of their accepting the blessings of the covenant, and a sealing of the

solemn vows which they make, by his strength, to serve him faithfully, and devote their time and talents to his glory.

Again: it was appointed to be a means of grace, wherein those who attend upon it have communion with their Lord, and feast upon spiritual and divine things. With this view of it the apostle agrees when he says, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (*κοινωνία*, the communication) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion or communication of the body of Christ?" The bread and wine are outward and visible signs of his body bruised for iniquity, and his blood shed for the remission of sins, and are intended to be the means whereby God conveys into our souls all the blessings which were purchased by the body of Christ once broken, and the blood of Christ once shed for them. They are designed to be aids to our faith, to enable us to lay hold on the blessed and glorious realities represented by them—feasting upon his body and blood—partaking of, and sharing in the benefits purchased by his death; this being the sense in which his body is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed. By them we are forcibly reminded that Christ's death is the life of the world; that whilst creatures die that our bodies may live, Christ died that our souls may live, and that eternally in a state of blessedness. But here, especially, are we permitted to lie at the foot of the cross, and receive an assurance, that he who spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us all, will with him freely give us all things, and, indeed, does give us all spiritual blessings richly to enjoy. And taught in his word that he will come again, the second time, without sin unto salvation, we are enabled to indulge the hope, that, when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we, also, appear with him in glory. O, how many myriads have been replenished here with marrow and fat things; with "fat things full of marrow, and with wine on the lees, well

refined." Without any hesitation we may subscribe to the language of the poet :

" Millions of souls, in glory now,
Were fed and feasted here;
And millions more, still on the way,
Around the board appear."

Once more : it was instituted to be a bond of union, and means of mutual love, between the people of God, as members of one body. At the table of the Lord, professions of attachment are to be made, not only to the great Head of the Church, but to all his followers. Here we are to signify and declare, that we, being many, are one bread and one body, by virtue of our common relation to one Lord Jesus Christ ; being partakers of that one bread, which is Christ. It is here that the middle wall of partition is broken down, and the truly pious, however numerous, widely diffused, distinct in their denominational peculiarities, are recognized as one family ; being members one of another. Whilst surrounding the sacramental board, their minor differences are laid aside, and they, building upon the same foundation, and with the same materials, are brought to feel that they are all incorporated into one and the same covenant, and entitled to one and the same inheritance. Thus, dwelling in fellowship below, they anticipate the period when all the saints of God, having been washed in the same precious blood, shall come from the east and west, the north and south, and constitute one great family in heaven, and, in harmony, ascribe all the glory of their salvation unto the Lamb that was slain for them.

Having explained, within as short a compass as the importance of the subject would justify, the nature and design of the Lord's supper, we proceed to show that

II. SELF-EXAMINATION IS NECESSARY TO A RIGHT ATTENDANCE UPON IT.

Self-examination is at all times useful and necessary ;

being essential to our growth in grace, our felicity, and interest. Would we become acquainted with our true state, and have a proper view of the relation in which we stand to the Divine Being? It is requisite that we test ourselves; bring ourselves to the law and the testimony, and prove ourselves by the word of God. Nor can this be attended to with too much frequency and care. At least, every evening, ere we retire to rest, we should review our course of conduct through the day; what we have done, or thought, that was unbecoming our station as men, and our character as disciples of Christ; whether our hearts have been indifferent to the world, and placed on heavenly objects. But this is a work especially necessary to a right partaking of the symbolical bread and wine, and, as such, is positively enjoined in our text. The word in the original, δοκιμαζέτω, is in the imperative mood, and implies not a bare permission, only, but a clear and explicit command. And it would be equally as improper to neglect this, as to refuse to partake of the emblems of the body and blood of Christ.

But is it asked, "What is meant by self-examination?" The original word is a metaphor, taken from testing or assaying adulterated metals, and denotes a vigorous effort on our part to understand our real condition in a moral point of view, whether acting well our part in life, and answering the end of our being. It is to converse with ourselves, to discourse with our own hearts, to enter into a solemn conference with our own souls, and be solicitous about their eternal welfare. More particularly, it is to probe ourselves, by putting serious questions to our moral sense, and prosecuting them till a full and true answer be given to them. The following questions, among others, it will be well to consider, in our preparation for this holy communion: Have we correct views in reference to the nature and design of this ordinance; being exempt from that blind superstition which would substitute it in the place of

regeneration, but regarding it as a most sacred and solemn institution, by no means to be trifled with? Are we possessed of suitable dispositions of mind to approach the table of the Lord, having our hearts properly affected with a view of his bloody sweat and excruciating sufferings, and deeming ourselves to be the purchase of his most precious blood and the travail of his spotless soul? Do we unfeignedly repent of all our past sins and unfaithfulness, having a proper sense of their demerit; being truly sorry that so many blanks have occurred upon the pages of our history; and humbling ourselves as in the dust before a just and holy God? Are we resolved to break off from all our evil practices, to leave undone no duty enjoined upon us, and to avoid all evil—even the appearance of evil? Have we faith in Christ? Are we firmly persuaded that he is what he is represented to be in the sacred volume—the Son of God; that he hath lived, died, arisen, and ascended on high; that he is seated on the right hand of majesty and power; that he is a merciful High Priest, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; that he is an all-sufficient Savior, and the *only* Savior? and are we placing confidence in his atonement and intercession for our reconciliation with God, and trusting in him for deliverance from the guilt and power of sin; for a restoration to the favor and image of God, and for a full preparation to stand before the Son of man? Do we sincerely love him, esteeming him above every other object, taking supreme delight in him, being truly and affectionately grateful to him, and having no one in heaven but him, and desiring none upon earth besides him? At least, conscious that he is worthy of our love, do we ardently desire to love him—to have his love shed abroad in our hearts—to be emptied of sin and filled with holiness—to be emptied of pride and filled with humility—to be emptied of unbelief and filled with confidence and joy? In other words, have we such views of

ourselves, and of the plan of salvation, as to be deeply sensible of our need of a Savior; and, having counted the cost, are we willing to renounce all for Christ's sake—the vain pomp and pleasures of the world for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ? In fine, are we in love and fellowship with our neighbor? Have we purged out the old leaven, even the leaven of malice and wickedness; being disposed to forgive our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us? Have we used all proper means to be reconciled to our brother—obeying the divine injunctions, “If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone;” “Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift?”

Such are some of the inquiries which we should prosecute, in order to determine whether we are suitable persons to approach the table of the Lord. It is true, that the most eminent saint on earth, or the highest archangel in heaven, is not, intrinsically, worthy to sit down at the communion table. But the invitation of the Gospel, as well as of the Church, is, “Ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort.” But we proceed to consider

III. THE SPIRIT AND MANNER IN WHICH WE MUST ATTEND UPON AND PARTAKE OF IT.

“Keep thy foot, when thou goest to the house of God,” and “be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God,” is an excellent rule in the Scripture directory, for religious worship. On

no occasion should we rush into the presence of God in a careless or indifferent manner, being less respectful in our carriage and deportment toward him, than we would be to a superior, or even an equal. "Reverence and godly fear," are the characteristics which should mark our approach to the King of kings. But the nearer we approach to him, and the more intimate the communion we have with him, the more reverent should we be, and the more should we stand in awe of him.

Having, by self-examination, meditation, and prayer, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, received a preparation for this holy communion, we are to come to the table of the Lord deeply humbled under a sense of our own unworthiness and entire dependence upon Christ for salvation, designing to bear testimony to, and show forth his death; with a full determination to know nothing among men but Christ crucified; glorying in his cross, and counting all things—riches, honor, and sensual gratifications—but loss, that we may win Christ, and be found in him without spot, and blameless. While at his table, receiving the emblems of his death, we are to call to remembrance his dying love—love, as high as heaven, as deep as hell, as immense as the universe, yea, as immeasurable as infinity, and surpassing by far, the love of all beneath. Summoning the attendance of all the thoughts, we should direct their attention to that pure, disinterested, unmerited, and unparalleled mercy which impelled him to regard us in our low estate, to undertake our cause and rescue us from destruction. In our thoughts, we should follow him throughout the whole period of his incarnation, dwelling intensely upon his condescension and humility; his temptations in the wilderness, being sorely tried by the devil; his agony and bloody sweat in the garden; and his sufferings upon the cross, when he exclaimed, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. But especially should we contemplate him in his pre-existing

state, possessing all the perfections and attributes of the Deity; as "God over all and blessed for ever," receiving the homage and adoration of all the hosts above; and yet, disrobing himself of his majesty, divesting himself of his glory, and submitting to assume our frail nature, and in that nature yielding to death, even the ignominious and accursed death of the cross, thereby giving his life, or soul, a ransom for us. Nor should we refrain from dwelling on this engaging topic until our hearts are filled with love and thanksgiving, being constrained to exclaim in the ecstasy of our souls,

"O, how omnipotence is lost in love!
Father of angels! but the friend of man;
Thou who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand
From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood!
How art thou pleased by bounty to distress,
To make us groan beneath our gratitude,
To challenge and to distance all return!
Of lavish love, stupendous heights to soar,
And leave praise panting in the distant vale."

Indeed, viewing ourselves as being indebted to his sufferings and death for all we possess here, and hope to enjoy hereafter, we should with grateful hearts receive the tokens of his love. Instead of lamenting and being grieved at his death, we should greatly rejoice in the happy results of it; that through its medium God is glorified, Christ exalted in his dignified human nature, and salvation provided for man. And whilst angels are lost in wonder, admiration, and praise, in beholding the full glories of the Lamb, we, who are the sharers in his love and mercy, should call upon our souls and all that is within us, to laud and magnify his holy name.

Furthermore, deeply conscious that we are not our own, having been "bought with a price," we are, in the use of this means, to renew our covenant with God by dedicating ourselves afresh to his service, starting with renewed

vigor in the divine life, and laying hold on his promises for success in our heavenly enterprise. Frequently as we may have vowed in by-gone days, we are again to vow, and, in the strength of grace, to perform our vow. With our past failures we are not to be discouraged, but again to present our bodies and souls, with all the powers and faculties of each, together with our time and talents, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service, and bounden duty.

But, as without faith it is impossible to please God, we should come to this ordinance with a gracious confidence, as children to a father—to a father's table, expecting to meet with our Lord, and to receive fresh communications of his grace. That slavish fear, which straitens our spirits, and that distrustful shyness, which is displeasing to Heaven, should be laid aside. We should come to the table of grace, trusting in the merits of our great High Priest for the acceptance of our services, assured that he will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax. Whilst receiving the emblems of his body and blood, we should look through them to the things signified, and apprehend, by a strong and vigorous faith, the blessings that we need for life and godliness. In the act of giving ourselves to Christ, we should realize that he accepts the offering, is well pleased with our humble services, and gives himself to us, with all his unsearchable riches. But especially should our faith be employed in looking for his second appearing, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and in making suitable preparations for that eventful day. Thus shall the end of the institution be accomplished in us, and we always be in a state of readiness for his coming, having our lamps trimmed, and brightly burning.

Among the many reflections which naturally arise from this subject, we shall confine your attention to but two :

1. How invaluable are the blessings which men lose by

not observing this institution! Has Christ ordained this as an important channel of communication to his people? Is he wont, through its instrumentality, to bless them abundantly with an increase of faith, and hope, and love; filling them with joy and gladness; strengthening them with might by his Spirit in the inner man, and empowering them to discharge the various duties connected with their high and holy calling? Then are they blind to their best interests who refuse the tokens of his love. They despise the most exalted mercies, dash the cup of salvation from their lips, and expose themselves to the assaults of Satan, and become an easy prey to their enemies. O, how will such lament their folly, when it will be eternally too late! Their repentance will be bitter, their mourning deep—darkness will cover them, and they will weep with great lamentation. The recollection of their unfaithfulness will sting, as the sting of a viper, and scorch, as the scorching of a flame; their remorse will be intense, and their loss incalculable. God grant that we may, by attending to our duty, avoid such a fate!

2. How exceedingly great is the guilt of those who willfully and repeatedly neglect to attend this ordinance! There is no precept more explicitly laid down—there is no commandment more authoritatively put forth than this, “Do this in remembrance of me.” It is founded on the same authority as, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” And is there no guilt contracted in the omission of a known duty, and in disobedience to an express precept? Is it sinful to desecrate the Sabbath? So is it sinful to treat this ordinance with contempt, by neglecting to attend it. Nay, more than this, it is a virtual disowning of Christ, by refusing to acknowledge him. And will such perverse rebellion, such base ingratitude, be overlooked? Did the violator of the Sabbatic law incur a penalty—was he stoned without the camp? How much severer the

penalty—how much heavier the curse incurred by the violation of this, as imperative, and, indeed, more sacred law? Let all those, then, who have been careless and remiss in obeying this injunction, remember that they cannot be thus negligent with impunity. They will assuredly meet with condemnation from Christ, who will shortly say, “Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Let them now bewail their past negligence and folly, and let them, for the future, scrupulously observe this momentous obligation, that so they may be accounted worthy to stand before the Son of man, and to enter into that glory which he has prepared for them that love and obey him, that they may ascend and dwell with him in light, and love, and fellowship, for ever. May God give us wisdom to discern, and strength to attend to all the divine requisitions, and ultimately save us, for his mercy’s sake! Amen!

SERMON XV

BY THE LATE REV. WILLIAM B. CHRISTIE.*

THE SOURCE OF JOB’S COMFORT.

“For I know that my Redeemer liveth,” Job xix, 25.

In discoursing upon these words, we shall offer a few remarks upon

I. THE OBJECT OF JOB’S KNOWLEDGE.

II. THE GROUND OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND COMFORT,

* It is proper to say, that the following sermon was not prepared by the author for the press, or for reading in the pulpit, but merely for his own private use. But little attention, therefore, was probably paid to style in its composition; and in the delivery, the portions not strictly argumentative were undoubtedly much more full than found in the manuscript. It will, however, be read with much interest; and the fact stated will lead all to make proper allowance for any imperfections which may be observed.

M.

WHICH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THIS OBJECT AFFORDED IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF PECULIAR AFFLICTION.

I. *The object of Job's knowledge: "My Redeemer."* The leading points of discussion here are two: the person intended, and that act which constitutes him the Redeemer.

1. *The person who is this Redeemer.* The current opinion, so far as our information extends on this point, is, that the word is to be understood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Two things determine this to be the true interpretation. The phrase, "He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth," which phrase usually means the days of the Messiah. The other is, "Yet in my flesh shall I see God." These being sufficient to determine the application of the text, it will be found, upon examination, to afford a striking and clear proof of the pre-existence of our Savior, Christ. Mark the strength of the expression, "I know that my Redeemer liveth"—*liveth*, in the present tense. The argument may be thus given: Job lived many hundred years before the Christian era; but our Lord, as the Redeemer of Job, was then living; consequently, he must have existed before his manifestation in the flesh. Had Job believed in the doctrine of the present self-styled "Rational Christians," whose glory it is to degrade the Son of God—the Redeemer of the world to a mere man, he might have spoken in the future: "I know that my Redeemer *shall* live;" but he could not have said, "He *liveth*, or is now living." On this doctrine, which it is the fashion of the day most strenuously to deny, a few additional remarks and authorities will here be in their proper place. "No man hath ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven;" "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;" "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before;" "Again I leave the world and go to the Father." Here let it be

noticed, "That he came down from heaven"—that he "descended from heaven." He speaks of "ascending where he was before," and determines the meaning of the whole to be a literal descent, by the phrase, "Again I leave the world, and go to the Father." How, then, are these most express testimonies to be evaded? How? Why by this most singular interpretation, that the phrase "to ascend into heaven," means to be instructed in the counsels of God, with a commission to teach them unto men; and "to descend from heaven," means bringing and teaching them to men. The whole meaning, then, of all these and similar texts is, to learn and teach the purposes of God. To this interpretation we object, first, that it contradicts the plainest facts, and is, therefore, false. Moses, Isaiah, Daniel, and all the prophets were admitted to a knowledge of the Divine purposes, with a commission to teach them to mankind. All the prophets, according to this interpretation, came down from, and ascended up into heaven. To this, perhaps, it will be replied, that they were not admitted to so full and perfect a revelation of the Divine will. But this removes no difficulty. The case is not stated comparatively, but positively. "No man hath ascended up into heaven." Strong as this reasoning may appear, with it we are not satisfied. If to "ascend into heaven," mean *to learn*, to descend from heaven, being its opposite, must mean to *unlearn*; for by whatever figure the first is interpreted, the second, if the figure be maintained, must mean its opposite. We have, then, this accession of light: that our Lord Jesus Christ, being ignorant of the will of God, or, in other words, having unlearned it, came to teach us what he did not know. To our neighbors, all this may appear exceedingly rational. Let him believe this who can; we envy him not his understanding.

Again: "Before Abraham was, I am." Whether the phrase *I am* mean the same as the incommunicable name

Jehovah, we need not now inquire. But suppose the clause to mean, before Abraham was, or existed, I was, or existed, it will be sufficient for our present purpose. Surely Abraham existed many centuries before the Christian era, and, consequently, many centuries before his incarnation, or manifestation in the flesh; and that the text must be thus literally interpreted, is clear from the connection. "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" This shows that they understood him to speak of priority of existence. But to this it has been replied, that the text may mean, before Abraham becomes what his name imports, "The father of many nations," I am, or exist; or it may mean, before Abraham was born, I am he; that is, the Messiah, in the foreknowledge and appointment of God. Both of these absurdities are well exposed by Bishop Pearson: "'Do ye look upon me with astonishment, and wonder how I could have seen Abraham? Attend to what I now say. Think not that I would contribute to your mistake, which makes me preface it with this asseveration, Verily, verily, I say unto you. Before Abraham shall become perfectly what his name imports, The father of many nations—before the Gentiles shall come in, *I am*. Nor be ye troubled at this answer, as though I magnify myself; for what I speak is equally true of yourselves—before Abraham be thus made Abraham, ye are. Doubt ye not, therefore, nor ever make that, as ye did, again a question but that I have seen Abraham.' The second makes a sense of another nature, but with equal impertinence. 'Do ye still continue to question, and that with so much astonishment? Do ye look upon my age, and ask, Hast thou seen Abraham? I confess it is more than eighteen hundred years since the patriarch died, and less than fifty since I was born in Bethlehem, but look not upon this computation; for before Abraham was born, I was. But mistake me not. I mean in the knowledge and

appointment of God; nor in this do I magnify myself, for so were ye.' ”

How either of these answers could give any real satisfaction to the Jews, or the least occasion for their exasperation, is not to be understood; and that our Savior should speak such impertinences as these interpretations set forth, is not to be conceived by any who are disposed to submit to the divine authority of the Scriptures. If the Jews understood him as affirming no more of himself than was true of any other man, why charge him with blasphemy? and if they did not so understand him, did he not contribute to their unavoidable deception? But the language of the text is peculiar. It does not say, before Abraham was, I was, but *I am*. He not only reasserts the fact that Abraham saw his day and was glad, but he rises higher—he mounts above all creatures—he places himself with God, at the head of all being, arresting their attention by arraying himself in all the glory of a permanent self-existence; and this by assuming the very name of their Jehovah—*I am*—the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. All attempts to evade this text have proved in vain; and, until the modern school obtain a license to make a new revelation, far more faulty than the improved version, it will remain a weight upon their system that must for ever prevent it from rising among all who respect the truth of the Bible.

Having proved the existence of Christ before Abraham, I shall detain you with but one more authority upon this point: “And now, O, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was.” Can any being possess a thing, and that being not exist? Must not any being exist anterior, or, at least, jointly with any possession it may enjoy? If Christ had glory with the Father, and that before the world was, must he not have existed before the world? and, if so, is not the doctrine of his super-humanity and pre-existence established

in words and expressions as strong as language will allow? To all this, we know our opponents may reply, in the language of Dr. Priestly, "He would not build an article of faith of such magnitude on the correctness of John's recollection and representation of our Lord's language; and, so strange and incredible does the hypothesis of a pre-existence appear, that, sooner than admit it, he would suppose the whole verse to be an interpolation, or that the apostle dictated one thing, and his amanuensis wrote another." Thus, then, it is easy to see that no language could convince these *rational* gentlemen of the truth of this doctrine. But surely they are fully exculpated from the charge of incredulity; for what is there too monstrous for their belief, if you except only the truths of the Gospel.

If we urge in proof of the position for which we now contend, that it is said he came down from heaven, and speaks of it as a place in which he formerly dwelt in the bosom of the Father, and to which he was returning upon leaving the world, we are told all this means only being instructed in the divine purposes. Again: if we insist that he existed before Abraham, we are told this means no real existence, but only in the counsel and decree of God, which is equally true of every other man. If we urge that he had with the Father that glory before the world was, we are told this means only in the appointment of God, and not that he had an actual existence. If we urge that all things were made by him, we are told this means no proper creation, but only that he is the Author of that great moral revolution, by which all things are created anew. If we urge that he emptied himself of the glory he had with God, and took upon him the form of a servant, we are told this means that he did not make an ostentatious display of his miraculous powers. Thus they move on to their conclusion

with mighty majesty, telling us that to descend from heaven does not mean to descend from heaven—that to be before Abraham does not mean to be before Abraham—that to create does not mean to create; and to be before all things, means simply before he began to preach the Gospel. Authorities and remarks crowd upon us, but we forbear. We have given you the above to show the manner in which the gentlemen treat the word of God, and to point out their logical skill in interpreting the Scriptures. Should I be so happy as to prevent one individual from being taken in their snare, I shall have done a good work.

2. *What is implied in redemption?* The English verb, to redeem, literally means to buy back again. The learned tell us, that the word translated redemption means the price paid down for the deliverance of a captive; that it is, also, extended, in its proper acceptation, to signify deliverance from exile, death, and every other evil from which we may be delivered by a ransom, or valuable consideration. The application, then, is to be determined by the circumstances, or the condition of those who are the subjects of it. In the case before us, the subjects are sinners guilty before God, under condemnation, and liable to everlasting destruction. To the whole of this case our deliverance by Christ applies; therefore, it is said, “We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:” redemption from the curse of the law—from death, by a resurrection; and from future eternal punishment, by the gift of eternal life. In all this, however, there is a constant reference to the death of Christ as the redemption price: “Who gave himself a ransom for all;” “In whom we have redemption, through his blood;” “Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.” From all of which, it is manifest, that our deliverance is not a gratuitous one, done upon prerogative; but is effected for us, through the death

and blood-shedding of our Lord Jesus Christ: the ransom was exacted and paid—the sufferings and death of Christ were for captive and condemned man.

Of the same import are those passages which speak of our being bought: “Ye are bought with a price;” “The Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” The apostle speaks of some who “denied the Lord that bought them.” The price paid, St. John tells us, was the blood of Christ: “Thou hast redeemed us with thine own blood.” If words can have any meaning, surely the authorities we have produced are sufficient to put the question for ever to rest, and fully to evince that our pardon, and elevation to the joys of immortality, are only effected through the death and blood-shedding of our Lord Jesus Christ. The shedding of his blood, as the grand sacrifice for sin, is the available consideration with which the justice of God is satisfied, and through which mercy and grace flow in abundant streams to a guilty and ruined world. The means by which it has been attempted to evade these most explicit testimonies of Scripture, remain to be pointed out and refuted.

(1.) It has been objected, that redemption is spoken of where there is no reference to any ransom price, and where there could be no such thing; as where Moses is called the redeemer of Israel. It would be a sufficient refutation of this to say, if the deliverance of the children of Israel is spoken of without any allusion to a redemption price, our deliverance is not so spoken of. It is no where said that Moses gave his life a ransom for the children of Israel—that they were redeemed with his blood—that he bought them with a price. But all these, and many similar phrases, are used in relation to our redemption by Christ. This itself is sufficient to show that the two cases are dissimilar, and that, therefore, upon the case adduced, no objection can be fairly urged. But, again: The captivity

of the children of Israel was not penal, as ours is ; they were not under judicial condemnation, as we are ; no ransom price could, therefore, be required. Then, again, the dissimilarity in the two cases is manifest. But these objectors may be excused a close attention to facts, as strict argumentation suits not their lofty notions. The children of Israel were in bondage, sorely oppressed, and Moses was used as the agent in effecting their deliverance. This was sufficient to justify the use of the word in an improper, or accommodated sense.

(2.) It has been objected, that if we interpret the suffering and death of Christ as a ransom price, it involves the absurdity of supposing it paid to Satan, the power said to hold man captive. But had these objectors forgotten that it was not an article of their faith that there is such a being as the devil ? or have they a right to bring him into existence and put him out of existence, just as it may suit their purpose ? But let this go. Why was redemption restricted in its meaning to the purchase of captives ? Was it that the objection might be invested with some degree of plausibility ? or did they who make this objection not know that the primary meaning of the word was, any thing done or suffered with which the offended party was satisfied, as well as the price paid down for the release of a captive ? But suppose the word thus restricted, how does it appear that our captivity to Satan is analagous to the case in which, by the laws of war, the conqueror has obtained a right to the captives. Our captivity to Satan is judicial, and our being left under his dominion is a part of our punishment. He is only the permitted instrument in carrying into execution the sentence of the violated law ; and there is no point that more needs proof, than that punishment does not flow from the violation of the law. There is a statute in some states allowing imprisonment for debt. Under this statute a man is sentenced to prison, and put under the dominion of

an officer. Now, is he the debtor to the officer, and must the money be paid, personally, to him; or, is the money due to the law which has been violated, and which awards the money to him who holds the claim against the prisoner? Surely, to the latter. It would seem, then, that satisfaction should be made to the violated law, and by the law, given to Him against whom the offense has been committed. Thus, the objection connected with Satan, whose existence the objectors deny, amounts to nothing.

Once more, and I shall have done. An objection, first suggested, if my memory serve, by Mr. Paine, and often urged since his time, is founded upon the light of modern science, which has made us acquainted with the existence of unnumbered worlds. It supposes that the other planets in our system are inhabited by rational beings; that the fixed stars are suns, having planets revolving around them, similar to our own, and, also, inhabited; and that, consequently, it would be unreasonable to believe that God would make such special provision for the welfare of the inhabitants of so limited a portion of his dominions. In answer to this objection, I can but remark, that it is a little strange that men who boast of enlarged capacities, and claim to be almost the only correct reasoners, should have shown such manifest ignorance of the first principles of just argumentation. Before this objection can be of any weight, it must be proved that all these planets are inhabited by rational and accountable inhabitants; that these inhabitants have fallen; that they are under judicial condemnation—exposed to future wrath; and, therefore, need, and are the subjects of redemption. But have any of these been proved? Has it been attempted to prove any of them? Are any of them capable of proof? But all this must be done, before the objection can have any foundation. But these mighty men of science should be excused. They do not admire facts, evidence, and common sense. These

are left for minds not capable of enlarged views. But let this go. This boasted objection, is nothing but a foolish sophism, taking for granted, what ought to have been proved, that the planets are inhabited; that the inhabitants have fallen, and, therefore, were proper subjects of redemption. Until these are proved, we shall still continue to persist in the faith that is able to build up and strengthen us unto eternal life.

A remark upon the nature of Job's knowledge. It was a knowledge that united to Christ, and gave a personal apprehension of his merits, and a power, in the most perilous circumstances, to confide in him. This leads us, as was proposed, to notice,

II. *The consolation and encouragement which Job's knowledge gave him in the most gloomy circumstances.* Having detained you so long upon our first position, a few remarks must close. The condition of Job was one, humanly speaking, of wretchedness in the extreme. "Though after my skin, worms destroy this body." Some think, that Job's affliction was some kind of burning, ulcerous sore, produced by worms, which had undermined and destroyed his skin; and so completely had they accomplished this, that it is said, "He scraped himself with a potsherd." The word rendered *scraped*, is said to mean, peeling the loose bark from a tree. How expressive! to scrape or peel with a potsherd, his skin from his flesh. They carry forward the idea, "after my skin," which is already gone, "worms," perfecting the work of destruction, "destroy this body." Add to all this, his children killed; his breath estranged from his wife; his friends reviling him as a hypocrite; life fast ebbing out; despair drawing her black mantle around every earthly prospect. In this condition, he exclaims, "Have pity on me, O, ye, my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me." But at the very time we expect only despair, his sunken, dimmed eye lights up

with the joyful emotion of hope, and he adds, "*Yet in my flesh shall I see God, and mine eye shall behold him.*" Such is the prospect that hope lights up before the afflicted, forsaken patriarch. Faith, here, changes the whole scene, and, grasping fast the hope of immortality, triumphs and rejoices.

I am conscious of having detained you too long; and yet I cannot persuade myself to dismiss this subject without two remarks. 1. Job differed widely from the modern Freethinker and metaphysical Atheist, who persuade themselves to believe that they lie down in death, like the beasts that perish, and court annihilation, as a covert from the punishment of their sins. No; this good man looks forward to an inheritance where Satan will tempt and afflict no more; where children will no longer cause anxiety lest they should sin; where their death will no longer wring the heart with anguish, and cause to be shed over their grave the parting paternal tear; where friends will no longer prove cruel and unfaithful. No; there I shall suffer no more; I shall sigh no more;

"There from the river of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in."

I have a desire to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. In fine,

2. "Mine eye shall behold him, and not another." Eternal life, with all that eternal life shall embrace, shall be enjoyed by each individual, as though there was no other one to enjoy it; and yet each shall have it as a possession—perfect to each, yet common to all. The privilege and enjoyment of one shall not conflict with those of the other; but together, in harmonious strains, all shall join and sing, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

SERMON XVI.

BY REV. HIRAM M. SHAFFER

BETRAYAL OF CHRIST.

"Verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me," Matt. xxvi, 21.

NEARLY six thousand years ago, the Almighty determined to create our globe, and people it with intelligent beings. At his command, from chaos arose this mundane system, with all its primitive loveliness and Eden glories. After this, he said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;" and, by the word of his power, man awoke from the earth into conscious existence, in the image of his Creator.

Since that period, the earth has produced many illustrious individuals, who have distinguished themselves by their intellectual and moral excellence; but one, alone, among all the great, in ancient and modern times, who made his appearance nearly two thousand years ago in the city of Bethlehem, shines forth with untarnished brilliancy. His birth was thus announced by an angel of the Lord to the shepherds, whilst watching their flocks by night, on the plains of the city: "Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men."

This remarkable personage grew in favor with God and man; and when he arrived at the age of thirty, on the banks of Jordan, at his baptism by John, he regularly entered into orders in the Jewish Church, according to the law of Moses, which made the following requisitions:

“And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest’s office;” “And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water;” “Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: sprinkle water of purifying upon them.” Thus, John, by baptizing, or sprinkling the Savior, fully consecrated him to the work of his great mission.

He immediately associated with himself twelve persons, whom he called his *apostles*. These journeyed with him, wheresoever he went. His ministry was principally confined to the Jews, among whom he went about doing good—healing all manner of diseases, casting out devils, raising the dead, and preaching the Gospel unto the poor. About three years and six months after his public ministry commenced, he went up to Jerusalem, with his apostles, to celebrate the annual festival of the passover; and while at supper, he communicated the humiliating intelligence, that one of their own number should betray him.

Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, covenanted with the Jews, for thirty pieces of silver, to be their guide, and to discover unto them where Christ might be found at a certain hour of the night, so that they could take him privately; for they feared lest the people would rescue him, should they attempt to seize him in open day. So, then, after Judas had eaten of the passover, and had partaken, with the rest of the disciples, of the eucharist, he, deliberately, went and conducted the Jews to the place, in the garden of Gethsemane, where the Savior was; “And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail Master, and kissed him;” and thus the Savior of the world was betrayed into the hands of sinners. “But woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed.”

We will now consider the subject under the following heads :

I. THE POSSIBILITY OF A FINAL AND COMPLETE APOSTASY FROM GRACE.

II. THE SAVIOR MAY NOW BE BETRAYED.

III. THE CONSEQUENCES OF BETRAYING CHRIST.

I. *The possibility of a final and complete apostasy from grace.*

1. *This doctrine is clearly taught in the Scriptures.* A few quotations will suffice. "And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind : for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts : if thou seek him, he will be found of thee ; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever." This charge to Solomon, by an affectionate father, was given under the most solemn and interesting circumstances. King David had called together the princes of Israel, with his son Solomon, who was about to enter upon the administration of the government ; and after addressing the people, he gave this his dying charge to his son, not only as a father, but as a prophet of the Lord : "*If thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever!*" What can be more plain, impressive, and emphatic !

Again : "But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live ? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned : in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." The Scriptures frequently give instruction by presenting opposite characters in contrast. Prior to the text, the prophet informs us, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die ; but if the wicked shall turn from all his sins that he

hath committed, and shall keep my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live—he shall not die.” The sinner, if he become pious, and continue in a righteous course, “he shall live.” Then, the prophet informs us, if the righteous turn from his piety, and become wicked, “he shall die.” Death is put in opposition to the life spoken of. It is, therefore, to die to the favor of God here and hereafter.

Upon this subject, Christ speaks in the following emphatic language: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men can gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” The apostle Peter, in the second chapter of his second epistle, after speaking of the fall of angels, the destruction of the old world, and of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, shows that if believers now shall fall from grace, their latter end will be worse than if they had not known the “*way of righteousness*,” because of their having sinned against greater light and knowledge: “For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”

2. *The fall of Judas teaches the possibility of final apostasy.* 1. Judas was a converted man. “These twelve (Judas being named as one of them) Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles,

and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. . . Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Here Judas is called to preach; and had he not been a converted man—cleansed from his sins, the Savior would doubtless have violated the spirit of that law he came to fulfill, which says, "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." He is, also, endowed with power to perform miracles; such as, healing the sick, and raising the dead. As these miracles were to be performed by faith in Christ, this must be convincing proof that he was in a state of justification; for the faith that was necessary for the performance of these miracles, was a consequence of that state. He is most emphatically charged: "Freely ye *have received*, freely give." But to put the question beyond doubt, the Savior says, "Behold, I send you forth as *sheep* in the midst of wolves: (*unconverted men*;) be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Here Judas is called a "sheep," an appellation not given to unconverted men. 2. Judas did not continue in a pious course; but, through covetousness, betrayed the Son of God; and, in deep anguish and despair, instead of going to Christ for pardon, committed suicide, and thus completed the work of apostasy.

II. *The Savior may now be betrayed.*

1. *By covetousness.* We will glance at the betrayal of Christ by Judas, embracing the facts and motives. He, simply for the sake of thirty pieces of silver, or about *twenty* dollars of our currency, delivered up Christ into the hands of his enemies. His motives, unquestionably, were the gratification of his covetousness, or worldly-mindedness; for Judas, doubtless, was a worldly-minded

professor—very careful in reference to money matters. He was the treasurer of that holy band; and, as St. John says, “was a thief;” probably had often purloined money intrusted to him for their mutual support. No doubt Judas, therefore, purely through the love of the world was led into all his difficulties. He did not betray Christ through motives of malice, hatred, or revenge; but of covetousness. Perhaps, at that time, their funds were limited; and he, satisfying his conscience with the idea that he would appropriate a part of it to benevolent purposes, or to their mutual support, concluded to betray Christ into the hands of his enemies, supposing, perhaps, that he would make his escape; as, on a former occasion, he had seen the mob surround him, and when they were about to seize him to throw him over a precipice, he, by his power, passed in safety through their midst.

How many professors, actuated by the same motives of worldly-mindedness, betray Christ! The Savior says of his disciples, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” Now, this is the *true* character of all believers; and if they do not exhibit it in all their intercourse in society, they betray Christ in uniting with his enemies—in disproving the above declaration. Every believer professes to Christ and the world, that he is not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world. Now, every sin that he commits, through covetousness, is a betrayal of Christ. Suppose, in time of war, an American soldier, who, after professing his love and attachment to his country, and publicly declaring that he was not of the enemy, even as the commander-in-chief was not of the enemy, was afterward seen daily to act in concert with the enemy, would he not be called a traitor in the camp—one betraying the best interest of his country? So the Christian, professing that he is not of the world, but, by his daily actions, showing that he is of the world,

betrays his Master, and is, doubtless, guilty of a crime, as certainly ruinous in its consequences, if not repented of, as was that of Judas. Paul more than intimates the fact when he says of those who were once converted, and had tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, "If they shall fall away"—shall commit sin—"seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Was it an awful crime for Judas to lead the enemies of the Savior to the garden, and thus deliver him up into their hands? But would not his guilt have been aggravated had he clamored for his blood, and said, "Away with him, crucify him, crucify him? or repaired with the multitude to Calvary, and then drove the nails in his hands and feet, and thus have fastened him to the cross? But instead of this, he repented and carried back the money, saying, "I have betrayed innocent blood." Well, that professor who, through covetousness, or from any other consideration, is guilty of the sin referred to by the apostle above, not only betrays Christ, but "crucifies to himself the Son of God afresh, and puts him to an open shame." Look at the sin of covetousness. James says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." You are to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, not to wait for them to come to your doors asking alms. No, you are to go to them; and if they are needy, see that their wants are relieved. But says one, "I have nothing to spare." No; through covetousness you never will have. Says another, "I am in very moderate circumstances myself, and, of course, excusable." Stop, if you have not worldly goods sufficient to spare for their relief, you can "visit" them and ascertain their wants, and report them to the Church, or community, and use your influence to have them relieved.

But how many professors of religion may be found who are enjoying all the good things of this world, and laying up money for themselves and their children, who take no more thought for the poor, than if the Bible did not enjoin the duty of ministering to their wants. When we see widows and orphans left to suffer in the midst of Churches, we are ready to exclaim, "O, the curse of worldly-mindedness!"

Behold the millions of heathen in their degraded condition, without the Bible, without a preached Gospel, without the holy Sabbath—in a word, without any of the means of grace! Ask the thousands of Christians who are blest with wealth and profitable employment, why it is so. Alas, they must refer it to the worldly-mindedness of professors, who contribute little or nothing to the cause of missions. Look at the ministry among us. Many are sent from charge to charge, in very limited circumstances; the people with whom they have faithfully labored, withholding, through covetousness, a part of the small amount they expected for the support of themselves, their wives, and little ones. To the same source we may trace that most wicked of all traffics—a traffic which the civilized world has called "piracy"—we mean the slave-trade. And why this traffic in human souls and bodies—this severing the dearest ties of the human heart, regardless of the entreaties of husband, wife, parent, or child? It all comes of the love of gain. And why is the whole system of slavery kept up? The profit on the labor of the colored man is coveted.

Notice, also, the desecration of the Sabbath. Why so much travel and business on this holy day—so many steam and canal boats, and railroad cars running on this sacred day of rest? Through the love of the world, men would rob God of one day in seven.

Why the policy of our government of driving the poor

Indians from their homes, the land of their fathers, and the grave of their sires; thus denying them a home, or a place to bury their dead, this side the great river of the west? The answer is covetousness. What leads to the contemptible practice of contending for the highest prices when selling, and the lowest when buying? The same spirit of covetousness that led Achan to possess himself of the Babylonish garment and wedge of gold, and Gehazi to run after Naaman, telling him a falsehood to obtain some trifling presents. Let all ponder well the last command of the decalogue, and the words of Christ, when he asks, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" and of Paul, "The love of money is the root of all evil, which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows; but thou, O man of God, flee these things." See, also, 1 John iii, 15, and James iv, 4.

2. *By betraying the members of his Church.* What we do unto the members of Christ's mystic body, we do unto him. He who gives a cup of water, in the name of a disciple to one who belongs to Christ, shall not lose his reward. At the last day, it will be said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." And it will be said unto those who did *not* administer to the wants of the needy, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."

Now, betrayal means to deliver into the hands of an enemy, by treachery, or fraud. How many professors thus act with their brethren. In order to gain some worldly advantage, or gratify some evil passion, they unite with the enemies of the cross in degrading the character and reputation of a brother, exposing his foibles, weakness, or faults, or join them in a popular outcry against ministers, or

members, when the declaration of holy writ is, "Speak evil of no man."

From the close and intimate connection that exists between individuals of the same Christian fraternity, there is a confidence reposed—a oneness of feeling—a unity of spirit—a love that melts, and unites their souls together like drops of water. Many times, from these interesting relations, there is an opening of the bosom—an uncovering of all that is in the heart. Thus individuals are placed in possession of what might be termed the *secrets* of others—things never intended for the public ear. Now, a betrayal by either party to the enemies of the cross, thus subjecting the other to great difficulty, perhaps loss of character and a standing in the Church, is *base treachery*; or, if we, Judas-like, discover, or point out, where a member can be taken and exposed, his character and standing jeopardized, in matters which prudence would dictate should not be published, or the mantle of charity should cover, will it not be said, in a coming day, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto me?"

3. *We may betray Christ by our unfaithfulness.* Suppose one united to a military leader, and intrusted with important duties, to be performed in the sight of the enemy, should prove unfaithful, neglecting to perform those duties assigned him; or, if he performed them, did it out of season, or in a careless and indifferent manner, would not this be a betrayal of his leader and country? The Christian is united to the great Leader of the armies of Israel, the "Captain of our salvation," and important duties are assigned to each individual, some of which must be performed before the world, and in sight of the enemy; and he who willfully neglects these, betrays Christ and his cause. Or, what would be thought of that soldier who, in time of an engagement, instead of being at his post, should

be found loitering around the enemy's camp; and what must be thought of those soldiers of Christ who, on the days of the assembling together of the brethren, whether at the prayer meeting, the class meeting, or the preaching of the word, who, through unfaithfulness, remain at home, or loiter about the streets, or shops, with the enemies of the Church!

III. *The consequences of betraying Christ.*

1. *The consequences as connected with this life.* Judas, as soon as he saw the Savior in the hands of his enemies, and condemned through his perfidy, bitterly regretted what he had done. Conscience now awakes, and utters its fearful denunciations—anguish and horror seize his heart—bitter relents and wailings show the deep-toned condemnation written on his soul! Faithful memory is quickened to a morbid sensibility. What kindness he now sees in the Savior! He remembers all his affectionate addresses—his kind offices—and the baseness of his own treachery! He turns and looks at the money, and exclaims, “*O, cursed trash! what hast thou done?*” He rushes with it to the chief priests and elders, exclaiming, “I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.” He throws it down, and hastens away, feeling the terrors of the Almighty upon him. Despair settles down upon him like a black cloud, and he rushes into the fatal act of suicide, and thus completes the work of apostasy, and instantly goes to a backslider's hell.

What we have given is, doubtless, but a faint picture of Judas' case. But if these are the awful consequences of his betrayal of Christ, what will be the situation of those who now betray Christ, in any of the ways pointed out, when the Spirit shall cease to strive with them, when they shall lay upon a sick, and dying bed, and an awful eternity shall stare them in the face! Many will then see that they have not only betrayed Christ, but that they have

crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." And then, in deep anguish, they must leave their gold and silver, their farms and merchandise, obtained at the expense of religion, and, like a distinguished American statesman, sink into the shades of death, with the word "REMORSE" falling from their lips.

2. *The consequences as connected with eternity.* But here all description must fail! Imagination itself is unequal to the task! What! mortal man tell the undying sorrows of the lost! A few quotations from the Scriptures must suffice: "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup;" "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than, having two hands, to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched;" where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; "When the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and for ever."

In conclusion, how important that we should strictly observe the admonition of the Savior, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation?" And, especially, that we watch against the sin of *covetousness*; and perhaps there is no better way, in addition to prayer and faith, than to be active in all works of benevolence: such as contributing for the relief of the poor and needy, for the promotion of Sabbath schools, the Bible cause, and the missionary enterprise; the building of churches, and the support of the ministry among us. And our literary institutions should share in our liberal contributions. Cornelius-like, let our prayers and *alms* come up before the

great Head of the Church as precious odors. I beseech you, brethren, "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Betray not your blessed Lord. Follow not the example of Judas, lest you share his fearful doom; but follow Christ, imitate his example, and you shall reign with him for ever; which may God grant for his mercy's sake. Amen.

SERMON XVII.

BY REV. WILLIAM SIMMONS.

CHRIST AND HIS FORERUNNER.

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire," Matt. iii, 11.

HERE we have two very important personages brought to our view, namely, John the Baptist and our Lord Jesus Christ. One was to decrease, the other to increase; one was to prepare the way, and turn the hearts of the people to God; the other was to take possession of those hearts, and establish the kingdom of grace therein. The office and teaching of one was to cease, while that of the other was to continue to the end of time. The influence of one was limited to a few persons, but that of the other is to extend to all the nations of the earth. One was a mere man, the other God manifested in the flesh; one is entitled to our respect and esteem, the other to the adoration and warmest devotions of our hearts; one we love as a brother, the other we serve as a God.

In the discussion of this subject, I shall consider,

I. THE CHARACTER AND WORK OF JOHN.

II. THE CHARACTER AND WORK OF CHRIST.

In noticing the character and work of John, I remark,

1. That he was the subject of ancient prophecy. Isaiah speaks of him as "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." As one says, "He was all voice: there was a voice in his habit, a voice in his diet, a voice in his conversation, teaching, and conduct." He is spoken of by Malachi, as God's messenger: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me;" and, as Elijah, the prophet, because he was to come in the spirit of that self-denying man of God. Other men, indeed, had been the subjects of prophecy, but John is pointed out in a very peculiar way, and as performing a very peculiar work.

2. He was the connecting link between the Jewish and Christian dispensations—the point where the office of priest and high priest, established by divine authority under the law, was to cease, and another priest to be consecrated—one who had been pointed to by the very establishment of the priesthood in the Jewish Church. John descended in a regular line from the tribe of Levi—the family of priests, and was the son of Zacharias, a regularly appointed, and an officiating priest. His birth was miraculous. And it was said to his father, "Thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth; for he shall be great in the sight of the Lord."

3. As the character of John was remarkable, so his office and work were peculiar and great. He was commissioned by the Lord to preach repentance for the remission of sins. Under the regulations which existed prior to his advent, when a sinner would obtain mercy of God, he must come with his offering, to atone for his sins; but now, he was permitted to leave his offering, and to bring only his broken and contrite heart. This repentance implied, not only conviction for sin, but the confessing and forsaking it. What a glorious dispensation was here opened and presented to mankind, approaching the day in which God

should command all men, everywhere, to repent, and have their sins blotted out !

4. Another part of John's work was to administer baptism, by water, to all who came to him confessing their sins. This he did in, or at Jordan. Some suppose that the people were all dipped, or immersed; others think differently. On this point, I would refer you to the remarks of Dr. Clarke, on Matt. iii, 6, to which I fully subscribe; believing that many put entirely too much dependence on the mode of baptism. The Doctor says, "Can any man suppose that it was possible for John to dip all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and Judea, and all the country round about the Jordan? Were both men and women dipped? for, certainly, both came to his baptism. This could never have comported either with safety or decency. Were they dipped in their clothes? This would have endangered their lives, if they had not with them changes of raiment; and, as such a baptism as John's, however administered, was, in several respects, a new thing in Judea, it is not at all likely the people would come thus provided. But, suppose these were dipped, which I think would be impossible to prove, does it follow, that in all regions of the world, that men and women must be dipped in order to be evangelically baptized? In the eastern country, bathings were frequent, because of the heat of the climate—it being there so necessary to cleanliness and health. But, could our climate, or a more northerly one, admit of this, safely? For, at least, three-fourths of the year, we may rest assured that it could not. And may we not presume, if John had opened his commission in the north of Great Britain, for many months in the year, he would have dipped neither man nor woman, unless he could have procured a tepid bath. Those who are dipped or immersed in water, in the name of the holy Trinity, I believe to be evangelically baptized. Those who are washed or sprinkled with water, in the name of the

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, I believe to be equally so; and the repetition of such baptism, I believe to be profane. Others have a right to believe the contrary, if they see good. After all, it is the thing signified, and not the mode, which is the essential part of the sacrament."

5. Another duty connected with the office of John the Baptist, was, the inducting of Christ into the priestly office. He, being the Son of Zacharias, though not designed for a Jewish priest, but, being an extraordinary character, it was proper for him to introduce the Savior into the public ministry. Being about to assume the character of Prophet, Priest, and King, and to become the Head and Leader of the visible Church on earth, Christ would not "climb up some other way," but "enter in by the door, into the sheep-fold." Hence, he came to John to be baptized of him. John, not understanding the design of the Savior, "forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" He knew that his commission was, to baptize unto repentance, and that Jesus had no sins to repent of; and that it would be impious to require of the Savior of the world the same conditions which he did of sinners, before baptism. This was John's position, until Christ informed him that it became them to "fulfill all righteousness."

But, what righteousness was here referred to? Was it the righteousness of God? We answer, no; for that was full and complete. Was it the righteousness of faith? No; because Christ knew all things, and was not required to believe any thing. We, then, conclude it was the righteousness of the law—the ceremonial law; which required all priests entering into the priestly office, to be washed, or sprinkled with water, and anointed with oil, and then to be proclaimed the priest of God. This law was beautifully illustrated and enforced by the circumstances of Christ's

baptism. 1. John baptizes or washes him. 2. Instead of the anointing oil, the Spirit of God, like a dove descends and lights on him. 3. Instead of the proclamation under the law, a voice from heaven is heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." After this ceremony under the law, the initiated priest commenced performing the functions of his office. So, immediately after Christ's consecration by John, he was led into the wilderness and tempted of the devil. After this conflict with the prince of darkness, he began to preach, and to say, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

We are aware that some are of opinion that Christ was baptized by John for an example to Christian believers; and, assuming that John immersed Jesus, they say that all must follow him into the water. But if the position be true that by this ceremony Christ was introduced into the priestly office, then it follows, that he did not intend it as an example for us. That he was now consecrated to this office, and not baptized for our example, is evident, from the fact, that under the law, a man must be thirty years old before he could enter into the priestly office. So, Jesus was thirty years of age when he was baptized, or consecrated. And we have already seen, that he could not have been baptized with John's baptism, because that was unto repentance. So, neither could he have been baptized with the Christian baptism; for that is in the name of the holy Trinity, and John had no authority to baptize in this name. Some of John's disciples, who, at a later period, embraced the religion of Christ, had not heard that there was any Holy Ghost; hence, they could not have been baptized with the Christian baptism, but merely unto repentance.

John, while he lived, was faithful in his work. He was, finally, beheaded, to gratify the malice of a corrupt woman, at the request of a proud and wicked daughter, who had learned the foolish and vain practice of dancing. And now,

while, in all probability, they weep and wail in hell, he shines and shouts in heaven.

Having discussed the first division of the subject, I proceed,

II. *To consider the character and work of Christ, as set forth in the text.* He, also, was promised, and his coming long foretold. "The seed of the woman shall bruise his head," is the promise which inspired the first hope in the fallen souls of the sinful pair. This same promise was renewed, in another form, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. To the latter, it was said, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." And when he was about closing the scenes of life, and was blessing his sons, addressing Judah, he said, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Moses, having the promised seed in view, said unto the Israelites, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken;" and Isaiah, looking through the vista of time to the days of the reign of Christ, breaks out in the following language: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace." Thus patriarchs and prophets spake concerning Him who was to come. The attention of the thinking and God-fearing of the world was turned to the promised Messiah, a general expectation was excited, and "when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son." His advent into the world was attended with circumstances of a remarkable character. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also, that

holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God ;” “ And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger.” This event excited deep interest in heaven and on earth. It was announced to the shepherds, who kept their flocks upon the plains of Judea, by the angel of the Lord, while the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and the cherubic song proclaimed the joy of heaven and the bliss of earth. The angels having departed, the shepherds hastened to Bethlehem, and finding Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger, they published abroad what had been told them concerning the child. About this time, Simeon, a just and devout man who waited for the consolation of Israel, came, by the Spirit, into the temple, and took the infant Jesus in his arms, and blessed God, and said, “ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word : for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people ; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.” Anna, the prophetess, also, gave her testimony in favor of Jesus, and recommended him to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. Wise men, also, came from the east and worshiped him, and were not charged with idolatry ; because he was God manifested in the flesh. “ The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom ; and the grace of God was upon him.” At the age of twelve years, he was found among the doctors, at Jerusalem, astonishing all at the wisdom displayed in his conversations with them ; and in reply to his mother, he spoke of being about his Father’s business. This is he of whom John speaks, when he says, “ He must increase, but I must decrease.”

This mysterious being contains in his person “ two whole and perfect natures—the Godhead and manhood ; never to be divided ; whereof is one Christ, very God and

very man." As a man, he could hunger and thirst, be weary, sleep, suffer, and die; as God, he upholds all things by the word of his power—having created all things, and being able to subdue all things unto himself. This Jesus went about doing good to the bodies and souls of men, miraculously feeding the multitude with a few loaves and fishes, giving sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf, making the lame to walk, and the dumb to sing for joy; forgiving sins, casting out demons, and raising the dead, teaching, also, a higher and holier morality than had ever before been taught to the world. Thus he went forward cheering and comforting the hearts of the good and virtuous, and filling the minds of wicked men and demons with terror and dismay.

Among other consolations afforded to his disciples, when they were informed that he was about to leave them, was the promise of the same holy and heavenly influence spoken of by John the Baptist in our text. This sacred promise was presented to them in various forms by the Savior: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. . . . But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." These and many like gracious words of promise and comfort fell from the lips of the blessed Jesus before his crucifixion; but after he suffered and died, and had arisen, having conquered the last enemy, we find him employed in the same holy and blessed work, saying, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" no doubt referring to the influence of the Holy Spirit, as well as to his personal presence. "And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye

be endued with power from on high ;” “ And he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” From these prayers and promises of Jesus, his disciples were led to look for a remarkable effusion and outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

It remains, therefore, to inquire in the next place, whether these promises of Christ were fulfilled, and these large expectations of his disciples were realized. This matter is sufficiently clear, and abundantly satisfactory to all who take the holy Scriptures for their only and sufficient rule of faith. May we be aided by the Spirit of truth, while we attempt to present this important point in a clear and becoming manner.

Christ had directed his disciples to remain in the city of Jerusalem, until they should be endued with power from on high; evidently referring to the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire spoken of in the text. They did tarry in the city, waiting, no doubt, in faith, with much prayer, fasting, and humiliation for the holy anointing from God out of heaven. Their prayer was one—their faith was one, while they all, with one accord, in one place, were waiting, looking, and breathing out their souls to God, for the promised Comforter, when “Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now, when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed, and marveled, saying one to

another, Behold, are not all these which speak, Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?"

Here are several things worthy of notice. Though visible agents appear, they are employed by the invisible God, and for a supernatural purpose. There was a sound from heaven, perhaps as of thunder; then the rush of a mighty wind, which filled the place where the disciples were assembled; then appeared fire in the form of cloven tongues, which sat upon each one of them. Mark the influence which attended this fire. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost. And being filled and fired with the love of God, having good measure, pressed down, and rising up, and struggling for utterance, they give vent to the feelings produced by the inward anointing. "They began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance;" and although there were multitudes there from sixteen different nations, or speaking so many languages, yet all heard the wonderful works of God in their own tongue. Though some scoffed and said the disciples were filled with new wine, and were mad, Peter defended this great work of God, by saying, with confidence, that they were not drunken, seeing it was but the third hour of the day, or nine o'clock in the morning, before which time the most intemperate Jew drank no wine. He argued that this was the fulfillment of the prophecy uttered by one of their own prophets: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants, and on my hand-maidens, I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy"—teach or relate their Christian and happy experience of the great work of the Holy Spirit on their hearts.

This defense of the work, or baptism of the Spirit,

which Peter now made, was owned of God, and pricked the hearts of many hearers, and there was added to the Church that day about three thousand souls. Glory be to God in the highest for the descent of the Holy Spirit, filling his servants with joy and gladness, giving them to know and feel that they had waited in the right place, and in the proper way for the fulfillment of the promise, that they should be endued with power from on high. In conclusion I would remark,

1. That the institutions and ceremonies of the law had reference to this day of Gospel glory and power, revealed now with such clearness, fullness, and comfort to the hearts of the believers, who were waiting for the coming of the Comforter who should abide with them for ever.

2. That the gift and influences of the Holy Spirit forms the distinctive peculiarity of the Christian or Gospel dispensation, which was never fully ushered in until the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost.

3. That it is the common privilege of all Christians under the Gospel dispensation, to have the same holy and heavenly influence in their hearts which comforted the Christian believers on the day of Pentecost; for although John the Baptist was the greatest born of woman in his day, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven, or under the Spirit's dispensation, is greater than he, because they are anointed with the Holy Spirit as he never was. He, however, as a servant, served God as he was directed, and, no doubt, obtained eternal life, while it is to be feared, that even in the nineteenth century, there are many who have been baptized in the name of the adorable Trinity, who are not as near the Christian dispensation as he was; resting in outward forms, glorying that they are not enthusiasts, and saying, no one can know his sins forgiven. The Lord open their hearts to understand the Scriptures, and his power to save.

4. It is by the operations of the Spirit, that the Christian knows that he is a child of God, and an heir of heaven; "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God;" "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." In a word, those who fully enter into the state referred to by John in the text are assured of the Divine favor, and filled with comfort, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost. There is a holy fire kindled within them, producing love to God and man, and filling the soul with unutterable bliss. Often, while tears of joy overflow the eyes, the tongue can only give utterance to the joys of a heart filled with the love of God, in rapturous shouts of glory, halleluiah, praise ye the Lord! With this assurance, the Christian may live, and in it he may die. He may feel, when nature is dissolving, as did the venerable Bishop M'Kendree, when he said, "*All is well.*" Or, with St. Paul, he may exclaim, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them, also, that love his appearing." Glory be to God for the hope and prospect of the heavenly world inspired in the heart by the baptism of the Holy Ghost! God grant that we all may be filled with the power and love of God by the same holy baptism, and finally meet in heaven, where all the saints of God shall dwell for ever in his immediate presence. In behalf of all whom I address, I beseech the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye,

being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now, unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

SERMON XVIII.

BY REV JOHN H. POWER.

THE SPIRITUAL BUILDING.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's works shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire," 1 Cor. iii, 11-15.

THE wisdom that inspired the holy Scriptures has seen fit to borrow illustrations of divine things from almost every department of nature and art. Hence, the Savior is compared to the sun: "The Sun of righteousness shall arise;" the Church to the moon: "She shall look forth as the morning, fair as the moon;" ministers to stars: "Who holdeth the stars (or ministers) in his right hand." Again: the Gospel doctrines are compared to seed: "Behold, a sower went forth to sow;" "The seed is the word." Once more: the Church is called a flock: "My sheep hear my voice." In the text before us, the figure is taken

from architecture—the Church is spoken of as a house, or temple, which suggests the following points for our consideration :

I. THE FOUNDATION.

II. THE BUILDERS.

III. THE MATERIALS OF WHICH THE BUILDING IS CONSTRUCTED.

IV. THE FIERY TRIAL, AND FINAL RESULT.

I. The necessity of a foundation, of some sort, for every building, is so obvious, that it requires no argument to make it plainer; and the importance of a good foundation increases with the value of the building to be reared thereon, and the purposes to which it is to be applied. Inattention to this has been the occasion of the loss of much time, skill, means, and even human life, while the dilapidated and abandoned tenements, and the bowing and broken walls of once costly edifices, furnish but too many gloomy illustrations of this fact. And the importance of the principle increases beyond all comparison, when applied to our spiritual interests.

The following are indispensable in a good foundation; namely, strength and durability; and the absence of either will render any material, however valuable in other respects, utterly unfit for such a use.

Christ, as the only true foundation of the Church, possesses those qualifications in infinite perfection; for, to him belongs “all power in heaven and in earth.” He is emphatically “the Almighty;” and, being the omnipotent Jehovah in his divine nature, he is able to sustain the Church—the whole Church—in all her trials and conflicts, however severe. And his durability is equal to his almighty strength: “He is the beginning and the end, the first and the last;” “The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” But, to be a little more particular. Christ, as the foundation, includes not only the fact of his absolute

divinity, incarnate in human nature, but all the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel—the propitiatory sacrifice of himself, that through the redemption, by his death, “God can be just, and the justifier of every one that believeth in Jesus;” and, through his triumphant resurrection, glorious ascension to the throne of mediation, and his prevailing intercession before the Father, he has become our “wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” Christ, as the author and embodiment of these cardinal doctrines of the cross, at once appears in a character that invites the hopes and confidence of all who feel the burden of sin, and the need of a Savior.

In this light, Christ is the foundation of the Church for purity of doctrine, comfort in affliction, support in trials, strength for duties, protection from foes, triumph over her enemies, deliverance from this evil world, and glory and honor in heaven. But, in particular, Christ is the foundation of the penitent sinner’s hope, trust, and confidence, for pardoning mercy, regenerating and saving grace; as, also, the foundation of the Christian’s hope for sanctifying, sustaining, and glorifying grace, mercy, and power.

With this brief view of the character and cardinal doctrines of Christ, the only foundation of this spiritual temple, we proceed to notice,

II. *The character of the builders.*

If we contemplate this member of the text literally, we may observe, first, that men, in any department of society whatever, should be qualified for, and acquainted with, the business in which they engage. The want of such qualification will prevent their success, disparage their reputation and the business they thus abuse, if it does not result in evil to others. But, secondly, they should be men of honest and untiring application. Knowing that their calling is lawful and right, they should make no other calculation than to prosecute it to final success. Without appli-

cation, the most distinguished qualification for business will be useless. And, brethren, these facts apply with all possible force to the case before us—the builders on this temple—the ministers of the Gospel of the Son of God; for that ministers are intended none can doubt, when Paul himself fixes the application. He says, “As a wise master-builder, (or minister of Christ,) I have laid the foundation.” We will, therefore, detain you here only to make a brief application of these obvious facts to the ministry; that is, qualification for, and application to, their holy vocation. And,

1. *The qualifications for this work.* (1.) No man can be qualified as a builder, or for the work of the ministry, without, in an ordinary degree at least, a good natural mind, and sound judgment. The idea that men so limited in intellect as to render them unfit for other learned, or important professions in society, may, nevertheless, be ministers of Jesus Christ, is so degraded that it does not deserve serious attention. It is earthly, sensual, if not devilish. But sound natural intellect is *not* this qualification, though, without it, none can be qualified. It is the foundation, or capacity, by which he is enabled to reach that completeness of character for the great work.

(2.) This preparation includes an extensive knowledge of the holy Scriptures in general, and a thorough knowledge of the cardinal doctrines of our salvation in particular. But this knowledge of the doctrines of Christ must be experimental, that he “may know that the doctrines are of God;” that is, no one can be qualified for the work of a builder in this spiritual temple without holiness of heart and life, without “clean hands and a pure heart.” He must have experienced the pardoning mercy and regenerating power of divine grace before he can successfully lead the returning prodigal, the anguish-smitten sinner, the desponding mourner, to the atonement of Christ. He

must enjoy the blessing of perfect love in his own heart, and the witness of the divine Spirit, that the "blood of Christ can cleanse from all sin," before he can lead the feeble, but hungering and thirsting believer, in the delightful paths of personal experience, to the garden, the cross, the sepulchre, to Mount Olivet, up to the throne of mediation, till his faith takes hold of the atonement, and he puts on the blessed image of Jesus Christ, and rejoices in the power of perfect love !

(3.) Without stopping to specify the literary attainments of the Gospel minister, we will only add, it should be his settled purpose, during life, to acquire all the knowledge possible, so far as it can be rendered useful to him in his holy calling. He who is indolent in the acquisition of knowledge is an unfaithful minister, and, most likely, will become a useless man, if not a stumbling block in the way of sinners.

(4.) No natural gifts, or attainments, or even holiness of heart and life, can supersede the call of God to this holy work. Hence, let every man beware lest he runs before he is called, or declines going when God calls him. But, brethren, it is not our design, in this discourse, to discuss the evidences of a divine call to the ministry; we may, however, say, that no man should enter upon this awfully responsible work without as clear a conviction that he is called of God, as he has that God has renewed his heart in the image of Jesus Christ; and that should be no less than "the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." On this important subject, "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."

2. *Application to this work.* Men may have distinguished gifts and qualifications for usefulness, but, from the want of proper application, they live and die lamented, chiefly for their flagrant abuse of the gifts of God. It is

more than any one can assert, that the light of eternity will not reveal the hopeless wreck of ministerial gifts that have been abused in like manner! To avoid this evil, and to accomplish the object of the Gospel ministry, application—intense application, is indispensable. This implies,

(1.) A cheerful and voluntary submission to the call, and an undivided self-devotion to the work of God, including all the duties, great and small, that the great Head of the Church has attached to the ministerial and pastoral office. Men may shine in one or more of the departments of their calling, and acquire great distinction and applause, while they are fearfully delinquent in others of equal, or greater importance.

(2.) The minister of the Gospel must prosecute his work with a single eye to the glory of God, aiming always, and in all things, to advance the best interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, in the salvation of souls—in bringing materials for this glorious spiritual temple, and conducting it to its final consummation.

(3.) He must pursue this work with an enlightened zeal, and holy energy of character, that will be seen and felt by all with whom he associates, or for whom he labors. Many men, and even ministers of respectable gifts and qualifications, from not cultivating these elements of character, come on to the stage of life, steal through the world, and pass down to the grave almost unknown and unlamented; while others, with less advantages, but with firmness and energy of character, burst from obscurity, or rise like the sun from twilight to the brightness of noonday, moving all the elements of society around them. As ministers, they make impressions for good wherever they go; and communities are compelled to feel that there is a man of God among them. Usefulness marks their pathway through life, victory crowns their last conflict at death, and

multitudes weep over the loss when they are called to their reward in heaven.

(4.) Perseverance is indispensable in the great work. The builder on this Gospel superstructure, the glory of which is to fill the world, will find many hinderances in his way. Some in himself, others in those with whom he may be associated, many in the materials which are to be wrought into the building, and not a few in the circumstances with which he may be surrounded. Nothing less than the grace of holy perseverance, relying constantly, by living faith, on the Master's promise, "Lo, I am with you, always, even unto the end of the world," will enable him to prosecute his work and bring it to its glorious consummation.

(5.) Finally, the builder, or minister, must be, practically, a man of honor; otherwise, he will fall into the snare of the devil, as others have done; by either taking other men's implements of labor and using them as his own, without either returning them, or giving their lawful owners credit; or, by hanging around the walls, watching the work of his more honorable fellow-laborers, and if he finds a crooked, broken, or half-finished piece of timber on the yard, or a loose stone or brick on the wall, bearing them off for his own use, and almost proclaiming a jubilee on account of his success! Or, to drop the metaphor, he will become a habitual and deliberate deceiver of a confiding people, by preaching, as his own, other men's sermons. The softest name that even charity can give this hateful practice is, "a pious (impious) fraud." The man whose religion has not saved him from this species of pilfering, has reason to question, not only his call to the ministry, but his conversion to God. Or, without this ministerial honesty, he will be a mere proselyter to his own creed and sect. Wherever he hears of a difficulty in a society or Church, there he will have a mission at once, not to do the work, and secure

the blessing of the peacemaker, but, on the contrary, to fan the sparks of excitement and strife to a flame, and draw off the disaffected to strengthen his own party. Is not this a most fearful abuse and perversion of the ministerial and pastoral office?

But, my hearers, while there may be a few who thus degrade the character they have assumed, God has his faithful workmen, who rejoice to go, in his name and strength, into the quarry, the mine, and the forest, and bring materials from thence; straighten, square, and fit each piece for its place in this glorious edifice, of which Jesus Christ is the ever-during foundation.

But we must pass to notice,

III. *The materials wrought into this building, namely, "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble."*

This, and the next member of the text, have given occasion for much speculation by expositors. The prevailing opinion, however, appears to be, that "gold silver, precious stones," mean sound Gospel doctrines; and "wood, hay, stubble," erroneous and corrupt doctrines. But that this is not the apostle's meaning, we think, can be made satisfactorily to appear. And to be as brief as possible, we remark, Paul, in the language before us, must have intended one of two things, either *doctrines, true and false; or persons, good and bad.*"

1. He was not complaining of the Corinthians for heresy in doctrine, but delinquency in practice. Consequently, a reference to doctrines in this connection, could only have diverted their minds from the subject with which he would have them most deeply impressed.

2. We think it has been shown, already, that Jesus Christ, as the only foundation of the Church, includes and embodies all the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel. And to interpret "gold, silver, precious stones," of doctrine, is to make the apostle utter the language of confusion: "If any

man build gold, silver—pure Gospel doctrines on Christ, who is the sum of all pure doctrines ;” that is, if any man build pure doctrines on pure doctrines, he shall receive a reward ! Again :

3. Nowhere in the holy Scriptures, unless it be in this single text, is a building used to represent a system of doctrines, either true or false. And it requires a great stretch of credulity to suppose that Paul would, in this solitary instance, so far depart from all Scriptural usage, without giving the least notice of it whatever.

4. Is there not a great incongruity in the use of such a metaphor to represent doctrines ? Some of the figures used for this purpose, are milk, meat, leaven, water, bread, which may be used for food and nourishment of the body ; as sound doctrines promote the health of the soul. But what possible analogy can be seen between pure doctrines, that feed the soul, and gold, silver, precious stones ? or, between wood, hay, stubble, and false and corrupt doctrines ?

5. But, further, doctrines are but abstract principles, and, as such, cannot be the objects of fire, either figurative or literal ; consequently, the Scriptures use no such metaphor with reference to mere propositions, or doctrine. And the idea of burning up doctrine is perfectly unintelligible ; but if it could be comprehended, we cannot see how it could be of any practical use.

6. But, finally, the text says, “ If any man’s works ”—alluding directly to wood, hay, stubble—“ be burned, he shall suffer loss.” Now if this means corrupt doctrines, the unscriptural conclusion follows, that it is a loss, injury, or misfortune to be deprived of, or saved from corrupt and false doctrines ! And it does not destroy the force of these facts, to say that the “ loss ” refers to the time and efforts spent in promulgating erroneous doctrine, or building wood, hay, stubble ; for you will recollect that the text refers to a

contingency that is future. First, the work must be wrought; then, secondly, if it is burned, he will, in the third place, suffer loss; clearly implying, that the loss takes place *after* the work is done; while the time and labor of the man who preaches false doctrine is wholly lost, from the moment he commences this mischievous work. And this would still be the fact, if no such fiery trial should ever come. But if it refers to labor and time, if no such day of trial and burning should occur, no loss would be sustained, though he should preach false doctrines all the days of his life. Is it not clear, therefore, that this text cannot be interpreted of doctrine, unless it can be made to appear that a man suffers loss and injury by being saved from false and corrupt doctrines?

But without pursuing this point farther, we come to notice the other position, namely, that by "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble," the apostle means persons, and personal moral and religious character.

And, allowing the Bible to be its own interpreter, we shall see that it uniformly applies such language as that in the text to personal moral character: "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God;" "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Here it is perfectly clear that the metaphor used in the text is applied, not to doctrines, but to persons; in which the purity of their moral character, under the trials of divine Providence, and the riches of his grace, is represented by gold and silver, tried in the fire. Again: "precious stones"—"ye, also," personally, not your doctrines, "as living," or precious "stones, are built up a spir-

itual house—a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” Here Peter uses the same figure that is found in our text, and applies it so clearly, to purity of moral nature, as to exclude the possibility of its referring to doctrine. And how is it possible that two inspired writers should make such a different use of the same term, without giving the least notice, when they are both treating of the same subject and illustrating the same thing, namely, the visible Church of Christ under the figure of a house—both recognizing Christ the foundation and the members the building?

But we notice the Scriptural use of the other figures used in the text—“wood, hay, stubble.” The Lord says, “I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.” Again: “Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts.” You will remark, that no language can be plainer, that persons are referred to in this figure: “I will make this *people wood*”—“the *proud, and they that do wickedly, shall be stubble.*” Believing that it has been made sufficiently clear that Paul makes the same use of those figures in the text that is made of them by the other inspired writers, namely, that gold, silver, precious stones, represent the pious and holy members of the visible Church, and that wood, hay, stubble, represent the formal and delinquent members, we close this part of the subject by noticing the practical use of this view of the text.

And, first, the duty of the builder—the minister, is plain, and his responsibility fearful. He must not only know the truth of God, but, by divine assistance, apply it to the hearts and consciences of men with such earnestness and energy, as to bring them to a soul-alarming sense of their undone condition without a Savior. He must lead them,

by repentance, faith, and holiness, to the cross, and build them upon Christ, the living and ever-during foundation. He must, by counsel, advice, admonition, reproof, instruction, and exhortation, watch this work with a vigilant and skillful eye. And, especially, must he be faithful in the administration of Gospel discipline, so that nothing be allowed to remain that would morally "defile this holy temple of God."

But, secondly, the people have, if possible, a greater interest in this matter than the preacher. He comes to them in the name, and by the authority of Christ. He finds them in their sins—in the way to death and perdition. He shows them the only possible way of escape, and brings them the only means of salvation. Hence, it is their imperative duty, as well as their eternal interest, to submit to the minister's godly authority, obey his Gospel instruction, follow his holy example, and give themselves wholly to Christ, though it should cost them tears and sighs, and involve the loss of ease, honor, and even life itself.

But should the builders be less faithful in their work, and the people less submissive to the claims of God upon them, this building might still go on in some sense, but the materials would be "wood, hay, and stubble;" that is, the Church, though she might be sound in theory, would be made up of half-awakened sinners—unconverted, time-serving, world-pleasing, fashionable members, having, at least in part, "the form, but denying the power of godliness." This is building with wood, hay, stubble; but, my hearers, remember the day is coming which will "try every man's work," and woe to those who are not prepared for that day. This leads us to notice the last member of the text—

IV. *The day of trial.* "If any man's work abide, . . . he shall receive a reward; if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss."

We indulge the hope, my friends, that something has been done in this discourse to rescue this subject from abuses to which it has long been subjected. Many, holding that the metaphors used in the text have reference to the speculations of the head, instead of the moral qualities of the heart, maintain that divine Goodness, by some kind of purgatorial fire, either in this or the future world, will consume all the mistakes and errors of his creatures ; and thereby purify and prepare all men absolutely for heaven. But when the subject is understood to refer to persons, and not mere opinions, and that they are to be the objects of the "fiery trials" of God's providences, chastisements, and final judgment, the subject assumes an aspect of most solemn practical importance. It appeals to every man carefully to examine, not only his head and his creed, but his heart and life, whether he has been renewed in the image of Jesus Christ, and is walking in all the "ordinances and commandments of God blameless ;" for however sound he may be in the theory of Gospel truth, if he is not holy in heart and life, he is, in moral and religious character, but "wood, hay, or stubble."

"The fire shall try every man's work." This day of trial may refer chiefly to the final retribution, yet, no doubt, it includes the divine administration toward man in his probationary state.

1. The providences of God in this life, in the figurative language of the text, may be viewed as a day of fiery trial. This is plain from the quotations already given in this discourse. And Peter says, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." Take, for example, a particular case, and, alas, they are but too numerous. A society, or Church, may be sound in doctrine, and to all human appearance, be united, pious, and prosperous. But a difficulty occurs with a member, or a family belonging to

this Church. At first but few know it; but it soon becomes a matter of greater notoriety—then of general conversation—soon of difference of opinion—then of contention—finally of angry strife. Now the fires of party discord begin to burn—Church trials follow; but instead of extinguishing, they only increase the consuming flame. Some are expelled, others withdraw, officers of the Church resign, confusion prevails, till the edifice, by the fiery trials that God has permitted, or sent on them to chasten their pride, or reveal their delinquency, is well-nigh consumed; evincing the humiliating fact, that the materials are fearfully combustible, even wood, hay, and stubble! Where is your popular and flourishing Church now? Alas, like your habitation on fire, it is but little more than a heap of ruins, with only a few of the godly members, as gold, silver, precious stones, able to abide the fiery trial. But is this sketch too highly colored? My brethren, your own observations and recollections furnish but too many melancholy proofs of its truth. But why are these things so? Inattention to the apostolic caution, “Let every man take heed how he builds;” and to the implication, “Let every man take heed how *he* is built thereon,” furnishes the answer.

2. For wise purposes, which the human mind cannot fully comprehend in this state of being, God permits, or sends seasons of fiery trial on the Churches at large. Witness the Church of Scotland, Puseyism in the Church of England, and the fiery trial of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.

3. But there is a day of fiery trial personally awaiting all—the day of death. Many have boasted of the antiquity and order of their Church, the orthodoxy of their creed, their long and reputable standing among the people of God, who have shrunk with horror from this trying hour, and whose sun of life has gone down in clouds and darkness;

leaving the evidence but too clear that they were not of the pure gold of the spiritual temple, but only wood, hay, or stubble.

4. The day of judgment will be the final period of fiery trial. This day will "try every man's work," because it will reveal every man's true character in the light of eternity, and be a practical exhibition, and an eternal application of that divine declaration, "Without holiness, no man shall see, or enjoy God." Then the pure "gold, silver, and precious stones"—all the holy, who have been built on Christ, the only foundation, and wrought into the spiritual temple, will be honored with a place in the Church triumphant—the temple of God's endless glory in heaven.

Then shall the faithful laborer receive his reward in exact proportion to his qualifications for, and faithfulness in his Master's work in this world. He had sown in tears; he had sacrificed all things earthly; he had prosecuted his work in the midst of opposition and reproach; nothing satisfied him but the conversion of sinners, and the sanctification of believers. But Christ was with him, God owned his labors, sustained and brought him in triumph from the toils of earth to the glories of heaven. The saints recognize him as the instrument of their salvation, and, as stars in his crown of rejoicing, they rise together above the flaming scene to the throne of endless glory, and shout, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God, unto him be glory for ever and ever."

And O, my brethren, it would be delightful here to pause and linger till we are called from this vision of faith to the glorious realities of sight; but solemn duty compels us to turn to the fearful doom of a different character. Those will say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? "But the Judge

will say unto them, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity:" "I never knew you as the gold, silver, and precious stones of my spiritual temple, but as wood, hay, and stubble—as formal, fashionable, time-serving, self-indulging, superficial members of my temple—my visible Church. The time passed to prepare, and now, unholy, and unfit for heaven, 'depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:' " "These shall go away into everlasting punishment"—being banished "from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power" for ever. But in this awful scene, where is the shepherd of this scattered flock—the builder of these consuming materials—the unfaithful minister? And where is his reward? He has been unfaithful in improving his call; or, in applying himself to this holy work, he has not built with a skillful and faithful hand; he has not led the people of his charge into deep, experimental holiness, or he has been unfaithful in the administration of godly discipline. He has been afraid for his popularity, or has yielded to the unreasonable prejudices of the people—has not been careful to keep the unconverted and worldly-minded out of the Church, and has thus built with wrong materials, even wood, hay, stubble—"has daubed with untempered mortar," and, consequently, his labor and ministerial reward are lost—hopelessly lost, for ever! But he, through want of moral courage, or some other circumstances, may have supposed, in these things, that, for the time-being, it was for the best; and, in consequence of this, and his deep repentance before his death, God, in his abundant mercy in Christ, saves him as a man snatched from the flames. O, what mercy that he is not doomed to perdition.

But remember, my hearers, at that day of decision, no man will be allowed to justify his follies, or crimes, on the ground of ministerial delinquency; for, although a

faithful ministry is a powerful agency, under God, in bringing the willing and obedient to Christ, an unfaithful minister can take no man to hell unless he chooses to go there. In the day of judgment, the condemnation of the sinner will be the result of his own choice, and not the unfaithfulness of others. At that day, every man, whatever may have been his condition in life, must stand before the infinite Judge, and answer for himself; and, whatever influence circumstances may have had in his case, his destiny for eternity will turn on this principle: *Ye would, or ye would not*; you decided for yourself whether you would be saved by grace, or rebel against God. And, although agencies and circumstances may have facilitated your progress to heaven, or your plunge to perdition, still, all the influences of earth and hell never could have led to this result without your own decision. And on this principle God will fix the endless state of the human family in the day of eternal retribution.

And now, dear brethren, having detained you so long, we close with a word of admonition. Let every one examine himself, whether he is built on Christ, the rock of ages, and his heart purified by the Holy Spirit, as "gold and silver tried in the fire," and whether he is living by faith for a place in the temple of eternal glory. If there are doubts on your mind rest not for a moment till they are all dissipated. If your pathway is clear, and your prospect bright, wait, in the patience of hope, till the Judge calls you to receive the crown. With this hope, we commend you to God and the riches of his grace, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SERMON XIX.

BY REV. A. M. LORRAINE.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, AND ITS FRUITS.

“They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea,” Isaiah xi, 9.

THE whole superstructure of practical piety, and, consequently, of final salvation, is founded on the knowledge of God. We admit that the love of God can alone qualify us for the enjoyment of eternal life; but it may well be asked, How can we love God, unless we first *know* him? So fair, so lovely, is the character of our glorious Lord, that it is impossible for those who are in anywise under the reign of grace to know him without loving him. As the knowledge of God, then, is so absolutely necessary in the economy of salvation, our heavenly Father has condescended to spread the knowledge of himself throughout the world.

Be it our business, on the present occasion, to notice,

I. SOME OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED CHANNELS THROUGH WHICH THIS KNOWLEDGE IS DISPENSED.

1. *The Holy Bible* is an inexhaustible fountain of divine knowledge. It is a matter of sincere regret to us, that even in this enlightened age of Christianity—even now, while the Gospel of Jesus Christ is forcing its way into almost every land, and waving its blood-stained banner over almost every people, there are those who not only neglect this precious treasure themselves, but are opposing the distribution of it to others. The Pope of Rome, in the plenitude of his imaginary power and holiness, has denounced the Bible Society as “an enemy sowing tares among wheat.” When we think of the awful consequences which these unhappy men are drawing down on their own

guilty heads, we tremble. But when we reflect how nugatory are all their attempts to stay the progress of truth, or to subvert the glory of the Gospel, we are even tempted to laugh at their powerless efforts. Jehovah himself holds such characters in derision; and, if they repent not, he "will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh." But, blessed be God! the age of infidelity has nearly passed away; and, though many of her brightest sons leveled their keenest shafts at the Savior before they began to descend to their well-merited oblivion, yet the kingdom of heaven is still advancing! The Church of the immaculate Nazarene is rising over the ruins of demolished idolatry, and will rise until its holy spire shall pierce the heavens, and let down that joyful voice, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms and families of our Lord, and of his Christ." "Their rock is not as our rock, they themselves being judges." If the Bible were not of divine origin, what then? Still, it speaks the same holy language; and if it tends to convert liars, to reform drunkards, to intimidate robbers, to strike through hearts of murderers a well-merited pang, who are they that oppose the Bible? Certainly not good men. Good men would not oppose goodness; virtuous men would not oppose virtue; sober men would not oppose sobriety. None, therefore, but men of bad hearts, or dissolute habits, will oppose that sacred volume. But, brethren, you carry within your bosoms a living testimony, which bears witness with the Bible, that, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and, knowing that you have not followed cunningly-devised fables, to you the truths of the Bible appear in all their splendor, and will ever be to your tried and tempted souls like a hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, and like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. May God speed the Bible societies, until they scatter the leaves of that sacred book in every

language, throughout the earth, for the healing of the nations!

2. The knowledge of God is extensively spread by a living *ministry*. Our Redeemer did not think that a few copies of the Gospel would be all-sufficient for the instruction of the world; he, therefore, instituted a living ministry. This ministry, in its origin, was purely itinerant—missionary. There was no exception. Christ did not say, “John, in view of that intimate friendship which has heretofore existed between us, and, moreover, in consideration of my leaving my aged mother in your charge, I will appoint you as the Bishop of Jerusalem;” or, “Peter, as a reward of your zeal and boldness, I will station you in the diocese of Rome.” No; but he said to Peter, James, John, Bartholomew—to all, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” The apostles were not disobedient to the heavenly call. The membership withheld not their hands. The immediate conversion of the world was the prevailing desire of their hearts. No man called his property his own; and it was an easy matter, as Paul expresses it, to “rob” the established Churches of means to break up new ground. The consequence was, the apostles did, literally, what Christ commanded, and the truth was preached to all the world. But, in process of time, the ministry became lax; the laity penurious. The Church lost its aggressive character; the ministry became, in a great measure, local, and their efforts merely of a defensive character. For several ages, the Church was more indebted to the sword of princes than the Bible of God, for her extension of territory. The reformation, with all its attendant blessings, did not restore to the ministry its itinerant feature. We do not mean that preachers did not travel. The strong arm of persecution, in many instances, compelled them to frequent and long removals. And as they went, they preached Jesus and the resurrection; and

multitudes turned to the Lord. We mean that itinerancy was not imposed on all, as it was in the beginning. In the origin of the Methodist Church, Mr. Wesley paid due regard to apostolical usages. He sent out the ministers two by two, as our Lord had done, and made itinerancy an indispensable condition. And although other Churches have made no change in their regular ministry, in this respect; yet, have they long since seen the necessity of appointing a portion of their ministers to itinerant and missionary work; so that all the evangelical Churches in our land are endeavoring to carry out the great plan of our Savior—to preach the Gospel to every creature.

Although the Methodist Church has an itinerant ministry, yet so pressing and numerous are the calls from beyond the ordinary limits of her operations, that she has been compelled to establish a missionary society, which is somewhat separate and distinct from her common work. We well recollect the first Indian mission, which was located at Sandusky. It took our whole connection, from Baltimore to New Orleans, to support it, so slowly did the streams of benevolence ooze into the treasury. Now, we have many missions at home and abroad. And when we compare the missionary spirit with what it once was, we feel a momentary flash of triumph; but when, on the other hand, we look at the many obligations of our people, the immense work to be done—the conversion of the world; and then look at our meagre offerings, our best performances seem little less than so many insults flung in the face of high Heaven. Pardon, O Lord, the iniquity of thy servants! We have truly left undone the things which we ought to have done; and have done the things which we ought not to have done. The preaching of the Gospel is the most successful means of spreading the knowledge of God. “Faith comes by hearing: and hearing, by the preaching of the word. But how can they hear, without a preacher?

and how can they preach, except they be sent"—unless the Church sends them.

3. *Tracts* have been found useful in spreading the knowledge of God. Indeed, these little, silent, flying messengers of truth, may be considered a novel order of ministers. They are much inferior to a living ministry, in some particulars; but they have the advantage in other points. Men are sometimes too bigoted to hear their fellow-men. But who will not read a tract, and read it with patience? It may seem to cross, occasionally, the path of one's orthodoxy; but what man will be so childish as to get angry with a piece of paper? It may be laid by for a season, but it will be resumed, and read, probably, with candor. We sometimes hear a discourse, some part of which we cannot comprehend, and we have no opportunity of hearing it again, or of having it explained. Not so with the *tract*. If there is any thing which we do not understand at first, we can read it again, and again, until we make it all our own. Another excellency in tracts, is, their itinerancy. It was the intention of the parent society that their tracts should travel. They, therefore, put them down to a very reduced price, so as to put it in the power of all the members of the Church to do good by distributing them abroad. They should be scattered with some religious skill and prudence. Should you meet with a skeptic, or infidel, give him a tract on the evidences of Christianity. Should you meet with one blaspheming, give him the "Swearer's Prayer." Should you meet with a Christian who has put the standard of holiness too low, and is complaining, "The things which I should do, I do not; O, wretched man that I am," give him a pamphlet on "Christian perfection." Then follow your donations with your fervent prayers, and leave the event with God. The day of eternity, alone, will disclose the blessed result. In connection with this, if the limits of a discourse would admit, we might show

how extensively our religious periodicals are dispensing divine knowledge. Suffice it to say, they come to millions of the people, richly laden with the bread and water of life.

4. *Our colleges and seminaries* promote the knowledge of God. This we mention as a recent instrumentality. We well remember when the few seats of learning in our country were principally filled with confirmed, but talented infidels; and pious parents preferred devoting their sons to comparative ignorance, rather than to jeopard their souls in the pursuit of science. But now, to a great extent, Christ reigns over all the fountains of knowledge. And we may ask, where is the high-school on which the Lord has not poured out the Spirit of grace? We do not undertake the unearthly task of making ministers; but, we educate our children, whether they are to be devoted to the farm or the forum. If the Lord comes down in the majesty of his power, and converts, and presses them into his service, we say, "It is the Lord! Let him do whatsoever he sees best; only, let thy kingdom come—thy will be done."

5. Last, but not least, the *Sabbath school* is a mighty engine, under God, to spread the knowledge of salvation. Although the Church has always admitted that children are embraced in its membership; yet, for ages past, there was no appropriate provision made for this juvenile department. The ancient Church undertook to supply their lack of service by appointing godfathers and godmothers, whose business it was, to exercise an unceasing supervision over their respective charges, in the tender years of childhood. This arrangement, doubtless, originated in the purest motives, and, in theory, was quite plausible. What better plan could be devised, than to place every child under the religious guardianship of a pious member of the Church? But, alas! as it regards practice, it was a perfect failure. In the long declension of piety, the members, in many

instances, became worldly-minded. These spiritual parents regarded their charge, in infancy, as their peculiar pets. They seemed to think it their especial business to see that as the children advanced in years, they were inducted into all the fashions and extravagances of the day. Mr. Wesley saw that there might be something better than this. He requested all his ministers to gather the children together in every place, and form them into classes, for religious instruction. But the circuits soon became so large, and the ministerial work so amplified, that the preachers, alone, could not do justice to this portion of their charge. Such was the state of things, when it pleased God to put it into the hearts of some to organize Sabbath schools. It is truly astonishing to what an extent they have infused the knowledge of God into infantile minds! We often meet with lovely illustrations of that long-standing prophecy, "A child shall die at an hundred years old; but the sinner, dying, an hundred years old, shall be accursed." We frequently have well-authenticated accounts of children, of six, eight, or nine years, dying with all the maturity of spiritual knowledge, which was once only expected of the pilgrim of threescore and ten. And we much fear, that the hardened sinner of our day, if he should attain unto a hundred years, will die doubly accursed. We were particularly interested in reading of a little Sabbath-school boy, who was dying. He wished to see his father—a man who had been much addicted to intemperance. "Father," said he, "I am dying, and I want you to promise me, that you will meet me in heaven." The father tried to parry the question, by telling his child, that he would buy him certain toys. "O, father! do not talk about toys now; your boy is dying, and going to Jesus—*will you come?*" "Yes, son," said the weeping father. "Then turn me over, and let me die; for I am happy—father says, he will meet me in heaven."

These are some of the instrumentalities in promulgating the knowledge of God. Others may be developed, as the Church advances on to the high and holy destiny whereunto the Lord has predestinated her. But it may be asked, "If the knowledge of God continues to flow through all these channels, in rills, in streams, in torrents, until the world is inundated with the waters of life, what will be the event?" We answer, there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy, in all God's holy mountain. The expression, "My holy mountain," is indicative of the great revolution which will be wrought in this world by the "knowledge of God." This globe has been familiarly called, "This sin-cursed earth." The devil is said to be "the god of this world." When tempting our Savior, he laid claim to all the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them. Our Lord did not contest his claim. True, they were not his by proper and original right. But he had gained an unhappy conquest over man, and reigned paramount in his heart. But our text shows that God will rescue this earth out of the hands of the adversary, and restore it to the image of righteousness and true holiness, and call it, "My holy mountain." We will show,

II. SOME OF THOSE THINGS WHICH IN PAST AGES HAVE, AND NOW DO, HURT AND DESTROY.

1. *War* has been a very fruitful source of harm and destruction, ever since the fall of man. How many millions of our fellow-men have been hurried to an untimely grave, by cruel ambition and the devouring sword. Indeed, the work of human slaughter has gone on, through all ages, with little or no intermission. The cries of the orphan, the wailing of the widow, still rend the heavens; and this transient home of man is more like a slaughter-house than a "holy mountain." But when the knowledge of God shall prevail, wars will cease, to the ends of the earth. Nation shall no more lift up sword against nation—kingdom

shall no more war with kingdom. Jesus shall reign; and of his government and *peace* there shall be no end.

“The ox and lion at one crib shall meet,
And harmless serpents lick the pilgrim’s feet:
The smiling infant in his hand shall take,
The crested basilisk, or speckled snake;
Pleased the green lustre of his scales survey,
And with his forked tongue shall innocently play.”

Here, then, one great source of destruction shall be forever dried up.

2. *Intemperance*, especially in the use of intoxicating liquors, has been very destructive in its ravages throughout all ages. Some years since, it was ascertained, indisputably, that thirty thousand American citizens annually fall victims to this fell destroyer. But who can estimate the domestic afflictions, the tears, the groans, the broken hearts, and the crimes that followed in the long funeral train! We are much indebted to the “American Temperance Society.” It has done much toward staying the deadly plague. Multitudes have signed the pledge; but still we fear that those pledges are not permanently sustained where there is a woful deficiency of the knowledge of God. The experimental knowledge of God is the most sovereign antidote for intemperance. Here we cannot refrain from giving an illustration. Some years since, we were acquainted with a veteran of the cross, whose life appeared to be a living and daily comment on this passage of Scripture, “*Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks.*” In giving his experience, he observed, that he was forty years old, and was a confirmed drunkard before he ever heard the Gospel preached in its purity. They had their ministers in that day; but it was too much “Like people, like priest.” His curiosity was excited to hear a strange preacher who came along, and he was powerfully convicted. He often felt like obtaining the blessing of

regeneration; but he was as often overcome by temptation, and had to lament,

"Slain with the same unhappy dart,
Which, O, too oft hath stung my heart."

At last, he determined, in his extreme anguish, to retire from human society, and never return until he felt assured, that God had strengthened him against his ruinous propensity. He went into a deep forest, and spent the day in an agony of prayer. In one moment, his propensity for strong drink was totally destroyed; and, from that hour, until his death, when he was eighty years old, the sight and smell of intoxicating liquors were abhorrent. One morning, after giving an unusually bright testimony in class, he reclined against a brother, with a heavenly smile. When the meeting was over, they raised his head, but found that the immortal spirit had escaped without a struggle or a sigh.

3. *The judgments of God.* The rending earthquake, the sweeping tornado, and the fatal pestilence, have destroyed millions of our fellow-mortals. But these things come on the earth on account of the conduct of the children of disobedience. It is true, that the righteous and the wicked are so connected in this world, that these general judgments affect all. The result, however, is not the same. The pestilence that lays the wicked lower than the grave raises the saint to the paradise of God.

"A thousand ways has Providence
To bring believers home."

When the Lord is about to take his children to himself, it is not strange that he should remove them by the prevailing diseases of the day. But when mankind become deeply imbued with the experimental knowledge of God, will our heavenly Father be unjust, and visit the willing and obedient with the stripes of the children of disobedience? We trow not. There is a close connection

between moral and physical evil. When the world shall be morally prepared for a better state, the Lord will bless it with a purer and more efficient medical science. He will purify the atmosphere. Wholesome, but safe breezes will waft the pious sailor on. The ambassadors of God, in vessels of bulrushes, will cleave the tranquil air, like the eagle hastening to his prey. The Lord will restore to man (for his mouth hath spoken it) his long lost longevity. "As the days of a tree, are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the works of their hands. They shall not plant, and another gather; they shall not sow, and another reap." They shall plough in hope, and reap with joy; and there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain.

III. IN OUR APPLICATION, WE WILL SAY, THAT THE LORD WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS GREAT WORK THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF HIS CHURCH.

Hence, he has said, "Arise and thresh, O, daughter of Zion; for I will make thy horn iron, and thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth." But our fathers have been deficient, and we, their children, have followed their steps. If the Church had continued her apostolic zeal and liberality, *we* might have been the happy children of the millennium. The times and seasons God has reserved unto himself; he has not so fettered them with the iron bands of fatality, that they are not susceptible of the power of prayer. Christ, when speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem, exhorted his disciples to pray that the days might be shortened. They might be shortened or lengthened—the destruction might come in the winter or summer. That particular item in our Savior's prayer, "Thy kingdom come," is in accordance with this truth. We have been deficient, not only in fervent prayer, but, also, in action.

Let any man keep an account, on one page, of what he spends for superfluities to the injury of himself and family, and in direct disregard of the commands of God, and then let him put on the opposite page, what he gives annually for the conversion of the world—the important work about which he professes in his prayers so deep an interest. Alas, alas, in too many cases, the missionary page will not be soiled with a single entry. But suppose it is embellished with five or ten dollars, what is that in comparison with what we have spent on our own lusts. The truth is, too many of us consider religion as a secondary matter—a thing of leisure. And our own work—our temporal business or profession, is made of as much importance as the work of creation or redemption. Ask the neglectful member why he was not at meeting. “O, I had business—*important* business to attend to.” Well, brethren, God is not mocked. He sits tranquil and calm on his eternal throne, and mildly rolls the seasons round. Spring-time and summer, harvest and winter, come and go in regular succession. The earth annually rolls its millions into eternity, and its thousands, we fear, into endless ruin. But hear it, O, Earth! hear the word of the Lord, This globe will yet roll up, and present to the eyes of its Maker, a generation of men and women *who will be willing* in the day of his power—a generation of saints, who will make religion their profession, and the conversion of the world their *chief business*. Their little private trades and callings will all be made subservient to this great end, and they

“Will only live their God to love—
Their God to glorify.”

While they attend to God’s work as he has commanded, he will attend to their interests, and there shall be no lacking of bread in all their borders; for the abundance of the Gentiles shall be given unto them. Then there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy in all God’s holy mountain,

because the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the place of the great deep. Lord, let "thy kingdom come!" Amen.

SERMON XX.

BY REV. SAMUEL P. SHAW

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

"For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. v, 10.

EVERY subject has its importance, according to the nature, extent, and character of the doctrine embraced. Of all subjects presented to the human mind, that which proposes to teach the present, future, and eternal welfare of man is of the highest importance. This subject is fully brought to light in the holy Scriptures alone. Without their light and instruction, little satisfaction could be had on the present condition of man, and none on his future state. Following their light, let us prayerfully consider this subject, in the following order:

I. THE NECESSITY AND CERTAINTY OF A FUTURE AND FINAL JUDGMENT.

II. THE JUDGE.

III. THE CHARACTER AND EXTENT OF THIS JUDGMENT.

IV. A PREPARATION FOR JUDGMENT, AND ITS IMPORTANCE.

Our first proposition holds the doctrine of a future judgment. This will, in part, appear by noticing,

1. That there is, in the very nature and fitness of things, a moral obligation resting on all to obey God. This will be readily admitted by those who allow either the agency of man, or the divine authenticity of the Bible. Now, the

conclusion to which this admission forces us is, that there must be a state of final retribution, as the end of moral agency can never be demonstrated on the assumption that no account is to be rendered. And, certainly, it neither is, nor can be rendered in this life, from the fact that this agency continues as long as natural life itself. When, then, is man to render to God a final account of his stewardship? It must, of necessity, be after the termination of this life. Moreover, obligation implies service, and service implies accountability, and accountability looks, in all cases, to futurity.

2. The necessity of a final judgment will further appear by considering the injured rights of the poor, and sufferings of the innocent. If the Creator has given this world to its inhabitants as a place of residence, and as affording means of sustenance, he has given it alike to all, to be used as their relations demand, or necessities require. Each has inalienable rights, which cannot be taken away, or disregarded, except to his injury. Whether these rights have been respected and realized, needs no inspiration to tell. The poor and feeble, in all ages, have been oppressed, and no redress been obtained during the period of this life. We then ask, when are these wrongs to be righted? They certainly are not in this life; for they are often continued to its close. Who that looks abroad among mankind, will not be forced to acknowledge the necessity of a judgment to come? If for no other cause, yet certainly for the avenging of the wrongs of the poor, who daily groan on account of the oppression they are made to feel. Here, too, the innocent often suffer in the place of the guilty. It has been well said, "that if God governs the world at all, the equity of his government can never be made to appear, in the eyes of his moral subjects in this life, without a future, final judgment."

3. The proposition is capable of further proof, if we

notice the persecutions of the pious, and opposition, generally, to virtue and religion. The conduct of the ungodly toward the religious, has been, in all ages, more or less, like that of all nations toward the Jews, since their overthrow by Titus. All seem to think they may, with impunity, inflict injuries at their own discretion. Now, if it were even true that the piety of the Church is nothing more than superstition, this forms no justification for the infliction of injuries; and, least of all, where the world around realizes no evil by such religious practice. But the truth of any system of doctrine was never more fully established than is the doctrine of the Christian religion; and yet the Church has ever been the subject of severe persecutions. Certainly, then, the moral Governor of man will not always keep silence: though sentence against an evil work be not executed speedily, yet the Judge of all the earth will do right.

4. Look at the high-handed rebellion of the wicked; at their pride, and the abuse which they make of God's mercies. While God calls on them to walk humbly before him, they, by their conduct, ask, "Who is the Almighty, that we should obey him?" "Pride compasseth them about as a chain." They revel in luxuries, squandering with a reckless prodigality, in dress, furniture, and equipage, the property of their Lord and master. This is often continued to the close of life, and without any signs of repentance even in the hour of death. And yet, in life they enjoy prosperity, and in death they have no bands. It would be natural to suppose, if this world were the place of entire adjustment of man's moral deeds, we should see satisfactory evidence of God's approbation of virtue and obedience, with a suitable opposition to wickedness and rebellion. But this is not the fact; for while his law denounces crime in the strongest terms, and threatens it with the heaviest penalties, we often behold the virtuous left to

the will of their opposers, and no visible demonstration of the divine approval of the one, or disapproval of the other. But the Bible puts this question to eternal silence. Whenever it speaks on this subject, it unqualifiedly declares in favor of the doctrine of a final judgment: "But the Lord shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment, and he shall judge the world in righteousness: he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness." (Read Hebrews i, 13. Likewise, Matthew xxv.) "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." These passages are abundantly sufficient to establish the doctrine in question, though they might be greatly multiplied.

II. *The Being to whom judgment is committed.*

The word of revelation continually assigns this work to Christ: "He shall sit on the throne of his glory, and before *him* shall be gathered all nations." Should it be asked, why judgment is committed to Christ, we have several reasons to offer:

1. His having taken upon him the redemption of the world. This relation to those who are to be the subjects of the judgment, very properly belongs to him who has paid the price of their redemption. By this act he became the second Adam; and, as such, he has answered to the claims of justice, in both a legal and representative capacity. He has all the right to decide and fix the final destiny of the race. But,

2. By having taken our law place. Man was created a subject of law. The moral acts of Adam were of a double character—personal and relative—his acts affecting the

whole human family, placing them in the same natural and legal relation to the executive as himself, personal guilt excepted. Thus moral depravity is the common inheritance of all his descendants. So Christ, becoming the second Adam, is said to take our law place—his obedience to the law respected the whole family; and, whereas, by the act of the first, all were accounted sinners, so by the obedience of the second Adam, all are made, or accounted righteous. These facts apply to the race in both cases while in a minority relation, having no other bearing on man after he has reached a state of moral and separate agency than that of freeing him from legal inability. Hence, because Christ has stood thus, in our law place, he has the right to be our judge.

3. It is proper that Christ should be the judge, because he assumed human nature. For, by this assumption of our nature, he knows our weakness and our wants, and can best decide on the reward which each should receive.

III. *The character and extent of the judgment.*

1. *It will be universal:* “Before him shall be gathered all nations.” How vast the concourse! Adam, and the latest of his descendants, will be there. Men of every age and of every clime, of every condition in life, and of every grade of moral character, will stand before the throne: “I saw,” says the revelator, “the dead, both small and great, stand before God.” And, remember, my hearers, you will be there, there to receive your final doom.

2. *The scene will be sublime.* Martial hosts, with all the pomp of conquering kings and generals, have often been seen gathered on the battle-field; vast fleets, with their towering masts, their spreading sails, and crowded decks, have been seen to walk the mighty deep; and these have their sublimity. But the sublimity of such scenes, compared with that of the judgment day, is but as the light of a taper compared with the noonday sun. If it

were but an assemblage of human beings, as when they lived on earth, it would far outvie any scene that ever mortal eye beheld. All kings and conquerors, with all their subjects, will be assembled on that eventful day, clad in *immortality*. To add still to the interest of the scene, angels, who far excel in power and glory, will mingle in the throng; and there will be the "great white throne," and Him that sitteth thereon, before whose face the heavens and the earth will flee away, and hell's profound be opened:

The Judge

Commands, and universal silence reigns:
All heaven hushed; hell emptied of its last
Inhabitant; earth rolled in seas of fire:
Sun, moon, and stars retired, while naught above,
Beneath, around, but God, the judge of all,
And millions waiting on his word.

3. *The decision will be final.* The last drama of this world's history will then be performed, time closed, probation ended, eternity begun. Then shall it be, that he who is holy shall be holy still, and he who is filthy must be filthy still. All accounts must then be closed, and the condition of all be for ever fixed. For ever! What a word is that; and O, what must it be to wake up to the stern reality, that the final destiny of all is now to be unchangeably fixed. It will, as has been said, "Almost turn the good man pale." Then will that saying of Jeremiah become true, with reference to all who have lived and died in sin: "The harvest is past, the summer ended, and we are not saved." Hearer, art thou without a preparation to meet that day? art thou still saying, "My Lord delayeth his coming?" Is it a time of eating and drinking with thee?—of riotous living? Know thou, that for all this thy God will bring thee into judgment: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing,

whether it be good or bad;" "Watch, therefore, for ye know not the day, neither the hour, wherein the Son of man cometh." Now you have time, the means of grace, the influences of the Holy Spirit, and may against that day prepare: death, judgment, and the retributions of eternity, warn you not to neglect this work.

4. *The judgment will exhibit the true moral character of all human actions.* It must be borne in mind, that motive gives character to action. In that day, millions of acts will be shown to be iniquitous which were regarded in this world as virtuous and praiseworthy. God looks at the intents of the heart. Doubtless great will be the surprise and disappointment of many on that decisive day: thousands who had crowded into the Church, and long and acceptably lived within her pale, and within her pale had died, will be met with the astounding declaration, "Depart from me; for I never knew you."

"How careful, then, ought I to live;
With what religious fear,
Who such a strict account must give
For my behavior here."

5. *In the judgment God will justify his ways with men.* This will be done by rewarding the virtuous and punishing the guilty, according to their works, as exhibited in the final account. This exhibition could not be made during their stay on earth, as the entire result of their influence could only be seen in the close of the world's history. Take, for example, the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and reformers. They lived their short day on earth, and accomplished what of present good they were able; but was this the end of these holy men? No; their writings and example still live, and shall continue to live, and to bless the world, till the end of time. And is it not right, if virtue be rewardable, that these good deeds, which they have left as a legacy to the world, should

receive their reward? Look, on the other hand, at wicked rulers, depraved parents, and corrupt writers, what evil influence their example and writings have exerted, and are still exerting on the human family. They, likewise, shall have their reward. Well would it be if we always felt the force of this great truth. What a motive to avoid every species of sin, and to live a life of virtue and religion.

6. *A further work of that day will be to draw a line of eternal separation between the righteous and the wicked.* The mediatorial kingdom being closed, each will be consigned to his appropriate state according as his works have been. Here the tares and wheat grow together. But all, then, shall “return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.” The saints of all ages will then in heavenly harmony meet; while the Judge, smiling, shall say unto them, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” This shall be enough. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Then shall be brought to pass that saying, Death is swallowed up in victory. And the Lamb shall dwell in the midst of them and shall be their light.

But how different will be the feelings and reward of those who stand on the left hand. See that dark, portentous cloud gathering over their devoted heads! Once there was hope in their every case. Mercy plead their guilty cause, and vengeance lingered long. But, *alas*, the end has come, and found them unprepared. No oil in their vessels; no wedding garment to fit them for a seat among the guests of Christ. The day of Gospel grace is past. While it was gliding by, they were busying and amusing themselves with the merchandise, honors, wealth, and pleasures of this deluding world. Now, when they would call, God will not hear: “He laugheth at their

calamity." O, gladly would they escape that threatened storm. But it is now too late. How it must make the heart sink within them to gaze on the lost joys of heaven, while the fires of perdition kindle around them! Kindled by remorse, and fed by recollection, when, O, when will they be *quenched*? Never, while memory lasts, or immortality endures. "These shall *go away* into everlasting punishment." Eternity alone will fully reveal to the sufferer the import of the words "go away"—away from the blissful presence of God—from holy angels and sanctified men—from happiness and heaven, and from all hope of regaining the treasure lost. Yes, hope expires; the spirits sink; for, lo! the judgment is passed; the books are closed; the gates are shut; the seal is fixed; the righteous saved; the wicked damned! Now is heard, for the first time, the clear, loud, long shout of the redeemed, saying, Alleluiah, the Lord God Almighty reigneth. While from the deep, dark pit of damnation, ascends the smoke of torment, which will continue for ever and ever. If there be truth in these solemn thoughts which have been passing before us, it is manifest, that it is befitting every man to seek a suitable preparation to meet the decisions of a coming judgment. This brings us to the fourth point we proposed to notice in the text, namely,

IV. *A preparation for judgment, and its importance.*

Without entering into any speculations, or metaphysical reasonings on this momentous point, we shall rely on the word of God. The Scriptures tell us, we are guilty, and morally impure—unfit for communion with our Creator; that, through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, by faith in him, we may be forgiven, and made new creatures—formed in the *image of God*, "in righteousness and true holiness." This holiness consists in having the will subdued, and the affections purified, so that we find our chief happiness in

God; being delighted in the contemplation of his character, and in doing his will.

This is the qualification which the Bible requires. He who possesses this will have on the wedding garment—will be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. To all such it shall be said, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

Our last point for consideration is, the importance of obtaining this qualification.

1. *Our relation to God requires it.* He must ever be our chief source of enjoyment; and to enjoy him, we must be like him. He is a Spirit, intelligent and holy. We must, therefore, be spiritually-minded—lovers of holiness, or to dwell in his presence would afford us no delight. And yet how far from this are we while unrenewed by grace! How unfit for heaven! To seek this preparation is, therefore, of the highest importance. And what is done must be done quickly. For,

2. *Our certain and speedy entrance into the eternal world daily presses us to seek this preparation.* How short is life! What is it? “A vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.” How soon will the dreams of life with us be fled! Delays are dangerous. Procrastination is time’s executioner. What meanest thou, O, sleeper, arise, call upon thy God, if, peradventure, he think on thee that thou perish not. As God liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step betwixt thee and death; up, get thee out of this place; for the Lord will destroy the city. But,

3. *The condemnation we shall realize by neglecting this great salvation.* What excuse can we offer to God, or our own conscience, if we appear in eternity unprepared? for “this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light,

because their deeds were evil." How great will be the guilt of those who knew their duty, but who did it not; and to their willful rebellion against God added yet this, that they rejected the salvation which he provided for them by the gift of his own Son? What remorse must seize the guilty soul—what regrets fill it with unutterable anguish, while busy recollection calls to mind sins committed and mercy slighted! Now all this may be escaped by seeking God, who yet waits to be gracious. The Spirit still calls—the word directs—the means of grace invite—the minister cries, with trumpet voice, to rouse thee from thy dreams. The wails of those thy former companions in crime mournfully, yet powerfully call thee to begin the work of seeking God while he may be found—of calling upon him while he is near.

We must close. Never may we meet again on earth. But *shall* we meet again? We shall meet when the last, loud trump of God shall summon us to his bar. O, let us prepare against that day—let us all put on Christ; and then

"Together let us sweetly live;
Together let us die;
And each a starry crown receive,
And reign above the sky."

SERMON XXI.

BY REV. JOHN STEWART.

THE AUTHOR AND SUBJECTS OF SALVATION.

"For, therefore, we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe," 1 Tim. iv, 10.

A CAREFUL perusal of the writings of Paul, will produce the conviction that he possessed more than a common share of natural and acquired ability. Being well acquainted

with men and things, he spoke and wrote to edification. He speaks of some men who trust in "uncertain riches;" of some who trust in "the arm of flesh," and of some who trust in "images—the workmanship of men's hands." Again, he speaks of some who trust in "the living God;" and among them he ranks himself: "We trust in the living God."

Our text is replete with doctrine; and, in its examination, we shall speak,

I. OF THE LIVING GOD, WHO IS A SAVIOR.

II. OF THE LABOR AND REPROACH OF HIS PEOPLE.

III. OF THE REASONS WHY THEY LABOR AND SUFFER REPROACH.

Following the order proposed, we shall speak,

I. *Of the living God, who is a Savior.*

There is one being who is self-existent and independent—who exists, and cannot but exist. If there ever was a time when this being did not exist, that time would be now; because no being could have produced himself.

Theologians differ very much concerning the means necessary for gaining correct information respecting the being and attributes of God. Some have supposed that the volume of nature was sufficient to reveal to the natural man the God of nature. The *production* of all things manifests his *power*, the *construction* of all things his *wisdom*, the *support* of all things his *goodness*, and the *regularity* of all things, from age to age, his *immutability*. For, say they, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." Paul seems to have anticipated that the question would, in after-time, be started, "How shall they believe in Him, of whom they

have not heard? and, how shall they hear without a preacher?" He answers, "Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." True, it is not verbally proclaimed to every nation and tribe, that there is such a being as God. But *things* proclaim his being and attributes, in a language so intelligible and impressive, that the conviction is deep on the minds of all accountable beings, that there is a superior and overruling power, who holds all others accountable. The human mind is formed capable of philosophizing, both practically and speculatively. Man can descend from cause to effect, and ascend from effect to cause. Would all thus use their reasoning powers, there would be no Atheists found. All, traveling up from effect to cause, would gain knowledge of the great First Cause. They would acknowledge that He is the fountain of happiness, and the standard of perfection, who creates, preserves pervades, and governs all things—whose power is infinite—whose wisdom is perfect—whose goodness is unbounded—whose greatness is incomprehensible, and of whose dominion there is no end. But whether man can gain correct knowledge of the being and attributes of almighty God, blessed only with the volume of nature, or not, we will not here attempt to decide.

But, in addition to the volume of nature, we have the volume of revelation. In it God has been pleased to reveal his being and attributes. He there informs us, that he is *one*: "The Lord our God is one Lord." Though his essence is one, yet he exists under three adorable distinctions, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The *manner* of this fact we do not fully understand, but the *fact itself* we confidently believe. And, if infidels pour contempt upon the volume of revelation, because it contains mysteries which finite minds cannot comprehend, consistency will compel them to pour contempt upon the volume of nature; for it, also, contains mysteries equally incomprehensible.

Who of them all can understand the germination even of a spear of grass ?

This God is called in the text, "the *living God*." He has life "in himself." He has life independently ; and he has life efficiently. He imparts life to all his creatures, whether celestial or terrestrial :

" He lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, and operates unspent."

This "living God" is, furthermore, declared in the text to be "the *Savior* of all men." He is the only Savior ; and he is a sufficient one, for "he is able to save to the uttermost." He can save with or without the agency of men. He can save conditionally or unconditionally, as the subjects are adults or infants. But he saves all—first from the guilt of sin, then from the pollution of sin, and last from the effects of sin. That is, he *justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies* them. And here let me direct your special attention, for a short time, to the subject of infant and adult salvation.

1. Had the inspired penman only said, "By the offense of one, judgment came upon *all men* unto condemnation," the case of infants would appear hopeless. But, adding immediately, "Even so, by the obedience of one, the free gift came upon *all men* to justification of life," he excites hope in their case. The expression, "all men," comprehends as much in the last member of the sentence as in the first. And, as there is no medium between justification and condemnation, we conclude, that all who were brought into a state of condemnation by the first Adam, are brought back into a state of justification by the second Adam. The sentiment, I am aware, has been advanced, and strongly advocated, that children are, in some sense, *guilty*. Suffer me, then, to advocate their cause. I maintain their *gracious innocence*. 1. They cannot be considered guilty on account of being born of sinning parents. This all will

allow. 2. They cannot be considered guilty on account of their inherent dispositions inclining them to do evil. Every argument which would go to prove that the person who has a *propensity* to do wrong, but does not yield to that propensity, is guilty, would go, with equal force, to prove that the person who is *tempted* to do wrong, but does not yield to the temptation, is guilty, also. And, if this is true, Christ was guilty; for he was tempted. Adults who are justified, but not sanctified, still possess that evil nature—a nature averse to good. The difference between the two is this: the infant *is not accountable* for its unholy disposition, but *the adult is*; for it is as much the privilege of the adult to be sanctified, as it is to be justified. The fountain is opened for sin and uncleanness; the adult can apply to that fountain, but the infant cannot: hence, the infant is not accountable. 3. Nor can they be constituted guilty by an act of imputation.

It has been urged that infants must be guilty, or they would not suffer. It is said, that no just constitution will *punish* the innocent. Children, however, suffer; therefore, it is argued, they must be guilty. I admit, no just constitution requires that the innocent *should* suffer, yet a just constitution will admit that the innocent *may* suffer, when it is calculated to promote a lasting good. Otherwise, Christ could not have suffered, unless he suffered as a criminal, which none will allow. Take another illustration: Suppose the life of your child is endangered by a diseased limb. The surgeon is called, and amputates the limb. Will any say that the surgeon, in performing this act, is unjust or tyrannical, or suppose that the child is guilty, and deserves the infliction? Nay; all may agree that the surgeon is a just and benevolent man, and that the child is an innocent and beloved child. To admit that infants are guilty, and say that their sufferings are inflicted on them as a punishment from the Governor of the world, is revolting,

inasmuch as the child is equally incapable of committing a fault, or understanding the cause of its correction. We might, with equal propriety, labor to show that the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air are guilty; for they suffer, as well as infants; or, that justified and sanctified Christians are still guilty; for they still suffer affliction, pain, and death. It, therefore, appears, that the arguments brought from this source to support the doctrine of infant guilt, are, when weighed in the balances, found wanting.

If it is asked, why infants suffer if they are not guilty, I would answer, it is a natural consequence of the present constitution of things. Innocent and lovely children have suffered during life, on account of the misconduct of their parents. Whole nations have been made to suffer, through the misconduct of individuals. So, in this case, the descendants of Adam and Eve are a fallen race, suffering through the misconduct of the first pair. They are inhabitants of a disordered world—of few days, and full of trouble. But Jesus Christ has come into the world to counteract the effects of the fall—to restore healing to the nations—to immortalize the inhabitants, and restore them to ground far more advantageous than that which they lost.

Although I contend for the *gracious innocency* of infants, I am far from contending for the doctrine of *infant purity*. Justification is one thing, and sanctification is another. Infants are in a justified, but not in a sanctified state. They are born of the flesh—they must be born of the Spirit. Our whole nature is corrupt. The sense of Scripture is clearly expressed by the poet:

“Lord, we are vile—conceived in sin—
Born unholy and unclean.”

Matter of fact, general observation, and common sense, all declare that the understanding is darkened, the will perverse, and the affections alienated. Hence comes in the necessity of the *new birth*, without which none can enter

the kingdom of heaven. Infants are neither prepared for *heaven* or *hell*. Being justified, they cannot be sent to hell uncondemned. They cannot be condemned until they become actual transgressors. They cannot become actual transgressors until they are recognized as the subjects of the law; for where there is no law there is no transgression; (no sin, properly so called;) for sin is the voluntary transgression of a known law. No infant ever did or ever will go to hell. On the other hand, God is holy—heaven is holy—the inhabitants of heaven are holy—the laws, the joys, and the services of heaven are holy; and without holiness no one can enter there. Children are not holy; therefore, they are not prepared for heaven. You ask, to what state are they suited? I answer, they are suited to this. Jesus Christ, having undertaken our cause, begins his work early in reference to every human being. You have already seen that he has brought all infants into a state of gracious innocency, unconditionally. Their liability to punishment is taken away, and, in virtue of their innocence, they belong to the kingdom of grace, and should be recognized as members of the Church militant. He who has justified them unconditionally, will, in case they die in infancy, sanctify them unconditionally. And as, by the first act, he prepared them for the kingdom of grace, so, by the second act, he will prepare them for the kingdom of glory. In regard to this change, some have been curious to know the time when, and how it is wrought. But these are questions more curious than wise. Many adults who have been justified and sanctified, and who have received the direct witness that this is so, are, nevertheless, unable to tell the time, place, or manner in which the work was accomplished. And even those who can, are utterly incapable of explaining the *manner* of its accomplishment. “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor

whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." It is the Lord's prerogative to accomplish his own work, at the time, in the place, and in the manner of his own choosing; and we should be satisfied with whatever he does.

2. We now pass to speak of the salvation of adults. And we refer to those endued with *rationality*, sufficient to discriminate between good and evil, and possessed of *liberty*, sufficient to choose the good and refuse the evil. Before these, as moral agents, God places a system of truths to be believed, of duties to be performed, and of privileges to be enjoyed. Hence, they must *believe* the truth, *obey* the truth, and then they shall *enjoy* the truth. The truth shall make them free, and they shall free indeed—free from the *guilt*, free from the *pollution*, and, finally, free from the *effects* of sin. All such will find a home in heaven. We now hasten to notice,

II. *The labor and reproach of God's people*: "For, therefore, we both labor and suffer reproach."

1. *We labor*. Some suppose that orthodox Christians depend upon works. They, however, deny the charge. Others suppose they repudiate works; but they repel this charge, also. True, some have fallen into each of these errors; but such have no claim to orthodoxy. Those truly orthodox, pass between the two; and while persecuted by both, they are injured by neither. Orthodox Christians believe it is required of them to work, yet they admit they cannot merit any thing by their works.

There are four justifications spoken of in the New Testament. 1. That already alluded to as applying to infants: "Even so, by the obedience of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." 2. Justification by *faith*, obtained by adults, only: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God;" "He that believeth, is justified from all things." 3. Justification by *works*, or on the

evidence of works: “Know ye not that Abraham was justified by works when he offered up Isaac upon the altar?” “Ye see, then, how by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” 4. Justification upon the evidence of works altogether. This will take place in the day of judgment. Then our thoughts, words, and acts will all be disclosed, and by them we shall be justified or condemned. (See Matthew, twenty-fifth chapter, from the thirtieth verse to the end of the chapter.)

He who opposes good works, has a controversy with the prophets and apostles; for they were the advocates of good works, and labored hard to engage all mankind in the performance of them. He who opposes good works, pours contempt upon the most illustrious parables of our Lord. Christ commanded those who entered the “vineyard,” whether they began early or late, to labor until the evening, and then receive the reward. Yea, he who opposes good works, pours contempt upon the servants of God in all ages. For surely folly has never been more manifest in any, if good works are not important to salvation; for we find them living in the constant performance of the most arduous duties. They were convinced that God required them to labor, and they labored hard and cheerfully, and many millions have accomplished their work, and passed from labor to rest.

2. *We suffer reproach.* While Christ was doing the will of God, he suffered reproach from the world. And while we are doing the will of Christ, we suffer reproach likewise. The apostles and their adherents had much to suffer. The men of the world suspected their intentions, misrepresented their actions, and ever metamorphosed their virtues into vices. The Roman emperors had, probably, mistaken views of the Christian religion; hence, no less than ten of them put forth their edicts in opposition to Christianity. In consequence thereof, the followers of

Christ were compelled either to leave the Roman dominions, renounce their religion, or forfeit their lives. Only a few chose the first, fewer still the second, and, consequently, most of them submitted to the last. The blood of the martyrs, however, proved to be the seed of the Church; for it was found, at the end of each of the ten general persecutions, that the Christians were more numerous than at its commencement. It is true, the tide of emigration never rolled so strong from earth to heaven as during the continuation of those persecutions; yet the accessions to the Church were exceeding numerous, insomuch, that, in less than three centuries, Christianity triumphed over the mightiest empire of the world. But, unfortunately for the Church, it became connected with the state, and a decline in the tone of piety was the result. The Church soon passed into her wilderness state; and, for more than ten centuries, her stars were few and very far between. A Church, indeed, existed; but it was deeply corrupt. But few of its members possessed the *form*, and fewer still the *power* of godliness. However, during the sixteenth century, a glorious reformation was affected through the instrumentality of Luther, Calvin, and others. The work progressed prosperously for a time, until the Protestant Churches becoming national, they, in their turn, began to be greatly corrupted. At the time that Wesley, Whitefield, and others made their appearance, the condition of the Church in Great Britain was deplorable indeed. They, although members of the Established Church, discovered that the Establishment had well-nigh lost the power of godliness, and that but little of the form remained. Hence, they began to seek for holiness themselves, and to preach reformation of life to others. Their labors were signally blessed of the Lord, and soon the work of God revived. All who are acquainted with the histories of these two great revivals of religion, will be a testimony, that to those who

were the chief instruments thereof, the language of the text is applicable: they "*labored*," and they "*suffered reproach*." And it will, generally, be found true, that where Christianity has not gained the ascendancy of infidelity, that branch of the Christian Church which is the purest in doctrine and practice will receive the largest amount of reproach from the world. And, in like manner, the individual whose principles and practice approach nearest the correct standard will receive the largest amount of reproach. The reason is obvious. The example and influence of that Church and that individual most powerfully reprove the world. And this is the subject of my third general division:

III. *To show the reason why we labor and suffer reproach*: "Because we trust in the living God."

All who "trust in God," are required to obey his commands. But God commands us to "labor;" therefore, trusting in God, we obey his command and labor. And we suffer reproach for this very reason—that we labor in obedience to his commands. Were I to spend an hour on this division, I could make it no plainer; hence, I shall leave this, and propound one important question. Does it not imply wisdom to "trust in the living God?" Doubtless, you will answer in the affirmative. Then let me conclude by offering a remark or two, to encourage you to trust in him unwaveringly to the end.

1. There is no God that can *deliver* like "the living God." He has exhibited that ability in the deliverance of our race from under the curse of a violated law, and in making salvation possible for all. The great mass of our race, who have come to mature age, have, by their own acts, plunged themselves into difficulties, and exposed themselves to the pains of an endless hell. None of them could affect their own deliverance; none of them could hopefully look for deliverance from any order of created beings. However,

to all such a gracious day of probation has been given: they are privileged to call upon "the living God, who is a Savior," and obtain absolution from all their sins. Thousands have made the experiment—thousands are now making it; and the unanimous testimony of all is, "None can deliver like the God in whom we trust."

2. "There is no God that can *preserve* like "the living God." The Christian consecrates himself, and his all, to God, and God takes care of him. The adversary of his soul may seek for his destruction, as, long ago, he sought for that of Job. He may gain permission of the Lord to afflict him for a season; but, in the end, the afflicted soul will always find cause to exclaim, "Good is the will of the Lord concerning me." He will find that, although the enemy had power to afflict, he had not power to destroy. "Thus far," for purposes of wisdom and mercy, he may be permitted to go, "but no farther." Job, in the midst of his severest afflictions, was enabled to say, "Though He slay me, yet will I *trust* in him." He trusted in God, and was preserved.

3. And there is no God that can *reward* like "the living God:" "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein." But the earth, large as it is, is only one small province of his empire. Could you travel east, west, north, or south—could you rise above, or sink beneath, and push onward with the swiftness of light, you would not have traveled three-score years and ten, until you would have passed worlds in number beyond enumeration, and in magnitude vastly superior to the one of your nativity; and, upon your return, you would acknowledge that the dominion of "the living God" is universal, his resources boundless, and his possessions infinite.

Then, O, "*trust*" him—trust him as the God of providence, and trust him as the God of grace. As the God of

providence, he will provide you with temporal mercies, and, as the God of grace, he will feed your soul with the bread of heaven. And, while you employ the means to obtain the blessing of the God of providence, use the means to obtain the blessing of the God of grace, and you shall be happy on earth, and happy in heaven.

SERMON XXII.

BY REV. HENRY E. PILCHER.

THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

“How, then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans x, 14, 15.

IN this chapter, of which our text is a part, the apostle Paul continues his controversy with the Jews in reference to their mistaken views of God's method of saving sinners. He combats their errors with his usual perspicuity—charges them with having a zeal for God not according to knowledge—exposes their sophistry—repels, with the power of divine truth, the force of all their arguments, and shows most conclusively, that, in their tenacity for the ceremonies of the law of Moses, they overlooked almost, if not entirely, the grand procuring cause of human salvation, by virtue of the death of Christ; or, otherwise, though they professed to believe in the Messiah, yet they rejected Jesus Christ, the true Messiah, and the Gospel which he came to establish, by perverting the testimonies of God which were contained in the Old Testament Scriptures, the authenticity of which they publicly acknowledged. And, further, the apostle affirms their entire ignorance of God's righteousness,

and charges them with going about to establish their own righteousness. He then shows the absurdity of their claims to justification by the deeds of the law, and, at the same time, declares that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; and, further, represents Christ, in all his offices, as the true Messiah—the only Savior of perishing sinners. He chides their unbelief, and represents Christ as the only true and proper object of faith. He takes occasion here, not only to set forth the true claims of the Gospel, in reference to Christ, as its immediate author, but its efficacy in the salvation of all who believe with a heart unto righteousness. He then proceeds to show the design of the Gospel, and that, in order to the accomplishment of its ultimate object, it must be promulgated through the instrumentality of a proper and regularly authorized ministry: “For how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent?” which leads us to an examination of the authority by which the minister of Christ should enter upon, and the manner in which he should execute the sacred functions of his high calling. The text indicates,

I. A DIVINE CALL TO THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

II. THE NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE WORK.

III. THE DESIGN OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

IV. THE MANNER IN WHICH ITS DUTIES ARE TO BE PERFORMED.

I. *The text indicates a divine call to the work of the Gospel ministry.*

God has always employed his own instruments for the accomplishment of his own work. In the early dispensations of his moral government, in our world, he called the patriarchs, the prophets, and sometimes the direct ministry of angels, to execute his equitable and gracious designs in our world. Subsequently, he called the apostles and their

successors to the high and holy work of preaching the Gospel of his Son.

Noah was a preacher of righteousness, and received his commission directly from God to warn the antediluvians against their wickedness, apprising them of the righteous retributions of Jehovah, which slumbered not, though delayed for a time. Jonah surely had never gone to Nineveh, as the ambassador of God, to preach repentance to that wicked and idolatrous people, had he not received his commission from Heaven a second time. The Almighty, speaking by the prophet Jeremiah, says: "Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt, unto this day, I have even sent unto you all my servants, the prophets, daily, rising up early, and sending them." The prophet Isaiah ascribes his commission to the Spirit of God: "And, now, the Lord and his Spirit hath sent me unto you." The same prophet declares, in language the most clear and unequivocal, wherein he represents by himself, typically, the preaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the authority by which he entered upon and executed the high functions of his ministry, was divine: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted," &c. The apostle Paul affirms that his commission was not self-assumed, when he says, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." He was pressed in Spirit; he felt that the vows of God were upon him, "Yea, woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel." He plainly declares that it was not of choice on his part, but of necessity, that he preached the Gospel: "For necessity is laid upon me."

Now, from the facts detailed in the experience of the apostle Paul, and many others of the sacred writers, we may very justly infer the absolute necessity of a call from Heaven to the work of the Gospel ministry; for the moral

government of God has not been abrogated; its precepts remain unchanged in reference to the work of the Gospel ministry. The same rule that governed the apostle Paul and his coadjutors, must govern in all ages. Hence the necessity of extreme caution on the part of the Church in her selection of men to preach the Gospel of Christ; for nothing can be more subversive of the true and vital interests of the Church of God than an unauthorized, and, consequently, unqualified and irresponsible ministerial association. Men should be equally cautious, therefore, in entering upon so important a work as that of the Gospel ministry, that they run not before they are called, and be found warring at their own charges; "For no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron;" "For the prophecy came not, in old time, by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." It is true that God does not call men by the same miraculous power as in former days. He does not call them by an audible voice, as was the case in the days of the patriarchs, the prophets, and the apostles; yet he does call them by his Spirit. He speaks to the hearts and consciences of men in a manner that plainly indicates their duty, and enforces the conviction so strongly, that, like Paul, they are ready to cry out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Further: according to the unbroken chain of Scripture testimony, nothing is more palpably absurd, than to suppose that any man can be properly authorized to enter upon the work of the Gospel ministry, unless he first be moved by the Holy Ghost. It is unreasonable, also, to suppose that God would leave matters of such high import at loose ends, and trust to the wisdom of erring man the selection of the instruments to accomplish the great work of human salvation. The apostle Paul affirms, that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God

hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound things which are mighty." Though God has, therefore, seen proper, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, to call human instrumentalities to the high and holy work of publishing the tidings of salvation to perishing sinners, he has reserved to himself the sole prerogative of the selection of the instruments whom he sees best adapted to that work. And it is clear, that no man can have a just sense of the responsibilities of the sacred office of the Gospel ministry, unless he be moved by the Holy Ghost to enter upon that work.

Again: the apostle Paul affirms, that the diversity of grade, in the ministerial order, was of divine appointment. And further: according to the acknowledged economy of the Jewish Church, none were allowed to officiate in the office of the priesthood, excepting those who were regularly initiated; and that institution was acknowledged to be of divine appointment. John, also, was divinely authorized as the harbinger of our Lord Jesus Christ, when he went into the wilderness, preaching repentance to the people.

The example of our Lord Jesus Christ, the High Priest of our profession, is sufficient to settle for ever all cavil upon this subject, and establish the doctrine of a divine call to the work of the Gospel ministry. He was sent from heaven, not only to die for the world's redemption, but to complete the great and glorious scheme of man's salvation, by instituting and preaching the Gospel, of which he was the author. When, at the river Jordan, he was regularly inducted into the office of the ministry, or priesthood, according to the Levitical order, God acknowledged the consecration, and sealed his commission by the Holy Ghost, who descended in the form of a dove, and lighted upon his head, while a voice was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son." And from this time began Jesus to preach. Witness his inimitable sermon upon the mount; his teachings

in the Jewish synagogues, and in the public assemblies on the coasts of Galilee. Our Lord not only laid down the great precedent to all after ages, in reference to the manner, but, also, the authority by which his ministers were to enter upon and execute the solemn and awfully responsible duties of their office—demonstrating the truth with inimitable beauty, as he proclaimed with unparalleled perspicuity, and with unearthly eloquence, the Heaven-inspired lessons of peace and good-will to man, which were embodied in the celestial message which announced his advent into our world.

The twelve apostles (though one of their number fell by transgression) were the chosen instruments of God, for the special purpose of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. Thus, from a careful examination of the holy Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, we assume that there is nothing more reasonable than a divine call to the work of the Gospel ministry: "For how shall they preach except they be sent?"

II. *The necessary qualifications for the work.*

1. The man who professes to be called to the high and holy work of publishing the tidings of salvation to perishing sinners, must be well versed in *theology*. He must have ready and just perceptions of the attributes of God, and his method of saving sinners. And, in order to this, he must be thoroughly acquainted with holy Scripture—with all its doctrines and precepts; for this is the medium through which God has been pleased to reveal his gracious designs to dying men. He must take the Bible as the man of his counsel—as the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice; for "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And to be able to understand, or justly appreciate the high

claims of the Gospel, he must be a man of deep and intense thought—his intellectual and mental, as well as his moral faculties must be properly cultivated. He must, also, give himself to reading: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.”

2. And further: in order to a correct understanding of the *ethics* of the Gospel, the minister must be diligent in the acquisition of knowledge, without which he would not be able to teach others with ability: “Not a novice, lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil.”

3. Again: his knowledge of the doctrines of repentance, of justification by faith, of spiritual regeneration, and of sanctification, or holiness of heart and life, must be *experimental* and *practical*, if he would be successful in teaching others; for nothing is more preposterous, than to suppose that any man is qualified to minister in holy things, who is himself unsanctified and unholy. He could not say, “That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you;” or, “We are witnesses of these things.” Moreover, without personal holiness, no man is capable of appreciating the efficacy of the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin, much less, to teach it to others; for “if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” No man should ever presume to enter upon so sacred and high a calling as that of the Gospel ministry, until he has received the gift of the Holy Ghost; for, otherwise, he would not only be unqualified, but totally unauthorized to represent the high claims of the Gospel, as a “good minister of Jesus Christ.” He must tarry at Jerusalem until he is endued with power from on high. His ministry, or commission, must have the seal of the Holy Ghost, if he would have the divine approval.

4. Again: as the minister of Christ is set for the “defence of the Gospel,” in order to his success, he must

"*put on the whole armor of God,*" that he may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, and the devices of wicked men. He must recollect that he has a formidable host of enemies with which to contend, both visible and invisible: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness," or wicked spirits, "in high places." In addition to the combined influence of infernal agencies employed by the grand adversary of God and man, he has to contend with wicked men of various ranks—the rulers of the earth, as well as their inferiors—the refined, as well as the more rude—the learned, as well as the illiterate.

5. That he may be successful in repelling the combined powers of earth and hell, including all the stratagems of Satan and the artifices of infidel sophistry, he must be thorough in the acquisition of *literary* as well as theological *knowledge*. But when we speak of learning, as a necessary qualification for the Gospel ministry, we do not mean the mere acquisition of knowledge; but the proper education of both the mental and moral faculties; for the acquisition of knowledge, without this, will never qualify any man for extensive or real usefulness in society: while, on the other hand, knowledge, in connection with proper cultivation of the moral and intellectual powers, and sanctified by the light of divine truth, is just what every minister of Christ needs to qualify him for a successful performance of the arduous and responsible duties of his high calling. Indeed, without it, he must be defective in his ministerial qualifications, and, most assuredly, will not be able to make full proof of his ministry, in the defense of the faith against the assaults of the enemies of the cross of Christ. And, in the judgment of charity, we have too much reason to fear, that those who denounce learning in the Gospel ministry, do it in mere self-defense—urging their objections

against learning as a sort of apology for the want of better qualifications themselves, or else, for the want of a proper education, they are not capable of appreciating it in others.

Furthermore: when we speak of literary acquirements as a necessary qualification for the Gospel ministry, we do not mean to be understood as urging, that every man who is called of God to preach the Gospel should be compelled regularly to graduate in a literary institution, any more than that he should be compelled to pass from three to five years in a regular theological institution before he should be allowed to preach Christ and the resurrection: but we do urge, that he should give himself to reading, to meditation, and prayer; his habits of study should be well formed; his books should be well selected—leaving out all trash, such as novels, romances, and polite literature, falsely so called, which has a tendency to vitiate, rather than to improve either mind or morals. Finally, on this point, his course of reading should be well devised, and then prosecuted with industry and perseverance.

6. The minister of Christ should be “stable in all his ways,” a man of *unflinching integrity*, and *uprightness of purpose*, as, also, of *sound discretion*; “In all things showing himself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of him.”

7. He should be a man of *genuine piety*, so that he may “be an example to the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” He should be heavenly-minded, holding constant communion with God in prayer; “For,” says Paul, “our conversation is in heaven.” His soul should be filled with the love of God, and inspired with an ardent zeal for the salvation of perishing souls—a “zeal which cannot be awed by the scorching suns of the south, nor the ice-bound hills and polar snows

of the north—a zeal which the fires cannot consume, nor the floods drown.”

8. He should be a man of *peace*. Nothing is more degrading to the ministerial office, than a meddling with, and stirring up strife, either by hearing or bearing evil reports under any circumstances. He should adopt, for his motto, the language of the apostle: “Follow peace with all men.”

9. Above all men, the minister of Christ should be an example of *patience*. He should never repine under the dispensations of Providence, however dark and mysterious they may appear for the present. He should recollect that often, for the wisest and best purposes, God may, for a time, conceal the smilings of his face behind a frowning providence; therefore, when he cannot scan the providence of God, he must learn to trust him for his grace; though his faith may be sorely tried, he must recollect, that “when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life;” though he be persecuted, he must bear it patiently; “For so persecuted they the prophets.” He must submit cheerfully to bear the reproaches of Christ—willing that the world should say all manner of evil of him falsely for the Lord’s sake, though it cost him the sacrifice of his good name, and all else of earthly good; saying, with the apostle, “Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.”

10. The minister of Christ must be moved by *no secular motives*. He who enters upon this work with any less motive than God’s glory and man’s salvation, has yet to learn the first lesson of the minister’s duty, if he has not entirely missed his calling. Rather, he must be willing to give up houses and lands, home and friends, to go in search of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, wherever the providence

of God may direct; encouraged by the promise, "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," and cheered by the declaration, "They that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

III. *The design of the Gospel ministry.*

1. The Gospel is adapted to the capacities and necessities of all mankind. It offers wisdom to the ignorant, eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, feet to the lame, strength to the feeble, health to the afflicted, riches to the poor, liberty to the captives, joy and peace to the disconsolate, and life to the dead. It has for its immediate object, the salvation of perishing sinners; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, both to the Jew and to the Greek. That it is universal in its application to man, is abundantly evident from the announcement made to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem, by the celestial messenger, which fell upon the stillness of the night, soft and sweet as the music of heaven itself: "Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to *all people*." The apostle, in representing the efficiency of the Gospel, says, "The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto *all men*;" from which it is clear, that the Gospel contemplates the restoration of man to the favor of God, and the enjoyment of eternal life in heaven, by faith in the atoning merits of Jesus Christ as the grand condition.

But how is this great and glorious object to be accomplished? We answer, that it must be brought about by the instrumentality of preaching; for God has instituted the Christian ministry for that special purpose, as will appear evident from the declaration of St. Paul: "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." And, as we have previously affirmed that the design of the Gospel is the conversion of

the world, then it necessarily follows, that it must be universally promulgated. And that Christ designed his ministers to publish the tidings of salvation to the very ends of the earth is evident; for after he had called his apostles, and sealed their commission by his divine authority, he commanded them to “go and teach,” or disciple, “*all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”—plainly showing, that the world was the parish of the faithful minister, and that his business was to preach Christ and the resurrection wherever he went. It is very evident, therefore, that Christ designed, by means of an efficient, heaven-inspired itinerant ministry, to accomplish the great end of the Gospel in our world; and, from the fact that the Gospel ministry was instituted upon the *itinerant*, or missionary plan, and that plan never having been changed by our Lord or any of his apostles, that he designed it to be a precedent to all after ages; nor can we conceive of any other plan so likely to prove successful in the promulgation of the Gospel, and the accomplishment of its great end.

Finally: the grand design of the Gospel ministry is to accomplish, by the powerful demonstrations of the Spirit of God, a complete triumph over all the enemies of the cross of Christ, and to bring about the time when the latest foe of our race shall cease to hurt or destroy in all God’s holy mountain—the time “when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord”—“when all flesh shall see the salvation of God”—the time when the crimsoned banner of the cross shall overshadow land and sea, and the tidings of salvation roll from every mountain top, and re-echo through every valley, and across every plain, till the rulers of the earth, together with their subjects, inspired with a generous Christian philanthropy, shall meet, in one common brotherhood, to pay their homage at Immanuel’s feet—the time

when “nation shall no more rise up against nation,” and the eyes of men be no more pained with the sight of “garments rolled in blood”—when the golden chain of the Gospel of peace shall encompass the vast globe on which we live—when the undiminished light of Christianity shall rise in full-orbed splendor to the meridian of both hemispheres, and stand as a beacon light to all the surrounding nations of our world. Having thus briefly considered the design of the Gospel ministry, we proceed to notice,

IV. *The manner in which the duties of the Gospel ministry are to be performed.*

1. It is the business of the faithful minister to preach Christ, in all his offices, as the only Mediator and Savior of sinners: “Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God,” “whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” He must not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, though the world may frown upon him, warning sinners of their danger, and teaching them the way of salvation, as the Spirit of God may give him utterance. He must not be awed by mortal frowns to conceal the word of God, “nor lured by the smiles of men to soften the truth, or smooth his tongue;” but, in the spirit of meekness and humble boldness, urge the whole claims of the Gospel, lift the standard of the cross, invite the penitent sinner to Christ, and, at the same time, press home upon the conscience of the impenitent the claims of Divine justice: “Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men.” He must set life and death before the sinner. To him the word of Lord is as to Isaiah, “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.” It is his duty uncompromisingly to enter his solemn protest against the sins of the people, both within and without the pale of the Church.

2. The minister of Christ should be strictly correct in all his deportment; and his manner of preaching such as becometh the Gospel of Christ, lest he bring a reproach upon the cause of his divine Master. What is more disgusting than to see a minister of the Gospel of Christ acting in the pulpit as if on a theatrical stage, indulging in low witticisms, in order to court a smile, when he should win a soul, by enforcing, in a grave and dignified manner, the sacred and awful truths of the Gospel? What is more painful to the judicious, sober-minded Christian, than to see a man who professes to be called of God to minister in holy things, resorting to groveling wit, which has a direct tendency to create levity? and how do such ministerial performances appear to the unregenerate? Will they not have but too much ground to assume, that our most holy religion is a mere farce, and the Bible a fabled legend, if such be the true characteristics of the Gospel ministry? But, as the Bible is the word of God, and the religion of Christ eternal truth, will not all the intelligent and the judicious at once unite in the decision, that such things are a mere burlesque upon Christianity, rather than an honest exhibition of it? And it must be admitted by all, that the practice alluded to has a strong tendency to vitiate the taste, and disqualify many, if not all, to receive the preaching of the Gospel in its native simplicity.

How careful, then, should the minister be to avoid every species of groveling, undignified sayings, in the pulpit, that he may be an example worthy of imitation by all who attend upon his ministry! We are aware, however, that some may plead a constitutional peculiarity, in extenuation of the fault we have condemned; but this is, unquestionably, at best, but a lame apology; for, upon such a principle, almost every vice common to fallen human nature might be allowed. It is no difficult matter to detect the futility of all such apologies, as the principle itself carries

with it its own refutation, by calling in question the efficacy of the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin, and by rejecting that faith which purifies the heart and overcomes the world. And how unjustifiable do all such light exhibitions of the Gospel appear, in view of the declarations of the apostle: "Wherefore, seeing we have this ministry, we faint not, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God;" "Therefore, if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new; and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself, by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." Now, from the data laid down by the apostle in the above, and many other passages, in reference to the ministerial character, it is no difficult matter to decide the point, that whatever a man inherits by nature which is incompatible with the spirit and genius of the Gospel, ought to, and must be subdued by the grace of God, before he is properly qualified to minister in holy things.

In conclusion, we need only say, that, of all the subjects which come within the range of human investigation, the Gospel stands pre-eminent, in point of dignity; and, in real worth, it far transcends all others. It has for its immediate author the great Sovereign of the universe, the source of all good; it portrays to man, as in a mirror, his fallen and degraded condition by nature; it points him to the great atonement of Christ as the only remedy, and invites him to look and live; it shows the destructive consequences of sin in the present and future states, and proposes to reward the righteous with life eternal. In a word, it treats of time and eternity, and holds out a lamp to direct man from earth to immortality and eternal blessedness, and claims only to be

treated in a style comporting with its own dignity and excellence of character, in order to the accomplishment of its great designs.

SERMON XXIII.

BY REV. DAVID WHITCOMB.

THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN.

"She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband, also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates," Proverbs xxxi, 26-31.

It has ever been a distinguishing feature of revealed religion, in all its dispensations, that it exalts woman, and appreciates her influence in society. Paganism, Mohammedanism, and, we might add, all religions other than revealed, have always degraded her, reducing her to a mere beast of burden, born to be the slave of man's whims and passions, often denying her a spiritual nature, and an immortality. The Bible presents her to us as taken out of man, and, therefore, "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh;" designed as a "help meet for him," and to have such a hold upon his affections, that a man should leave father and mother, and cleave unto his wife.

Her influence on society has ever been such, that its character, to a very great degree, has depended upon her. The first impressions, which are always the most abiding, and which usually give character to the whole life, are received from the mother, in the nursery. We speak with enthusiasm of the mother of Moses, Samuel, John the

Baptist, the Wesleys, Edwards, and Washington; and, indeed, a correspondence, in many respects, is found to exist between almost all men who have ever been distinguished for greatness and goodness, and their mothers. The incomparable valor of the Spartans was, to a great degree, derived from their mothers, who, from their infancy, taught them to despise danger; and, when of an age which enabled them to go forth to war, gave them a shield, with the admonition to bring it home to them, or to be brought home on it. As "the child is the father of the man," the training up of a child in the way he should go, assures us, that when he is old he will not depart from it. The position and natural relation of the mother to her offspring, must give her a vastly controlling influence in the formation of their character and future destiny.

Revealed religion (and especially Christianity, which is its perfection) has done much for the human race in general; but it has been especially a benefit to woman; and she, in general, has acknowledged the benefit. She ministered of her substance to Christ and his disciples, while engaged in their ministry—"she was last at the cross, and first at the sepulchre;" and the greater number of those who constitute the visible Church being females, is proof of her attachment to revealed religion. To maternal piety the Church is indebted for her most gifted and pious sons.

In the second, fifth, and sixth chapters of this book, the writer has given us a painful description of the baneful effects of impure and vicious women on individuals and society, and, as if to indemnify us, in some sort, for the disagreeable contemplation, has presented us with a full-length portrait, in this, of a truly virtuous one. The term virtue, in the connection of our text, is not employed in a special, but in a general sense, and is the same as true piety, or religion. Our text is the latter part of this

beautiful description of a virtuous woman. In the discussion of this subject, we shall notice,

I. THE GREAT PRINCIPLES THAT INFLUENCE AND GOVERN HER HEART.

"She feareth the Lord." The phrases, "Feareth the Lord," "The fear of the Lord," &c., which so frequently occur in the Scriptures, are not to be understood as implying a servile dread, or terrifying fear of the Lord. This frame of mind may, and, perhaps, generally does, characterize the newly awakened sinner, when, aroused from his spiritual slumber, and brought to some just conception of the danger to which his sins have exposed him, the terrors of the Almighty make him afraid. The phrase is to be taken in a general sense, and indicates the great moral principles that govern the heart of the truly regenerate. As distinguished from the slavish fear just mentioned, it has been called a filial, or loving fear. This distinction is proper; for this fear of the Lord is a compound affection, and consists of love and dread. It is fully expressed by the word reverence. Reverence cannot exist where there is not love and fear. The mother loves the "child she bears" with an affection strong, tender, and undying; but she does not reverence her babe, because she does not fear it. Again: we fear ravenous beasts, or poisonous reptiles, but we do not reverence them, because we do not love them. We reverence the great and the good. A good child will revere a good parent. As God is "higher than the highest," so the reverence rendered to him should be supreme. He is to be loved with all the heart, and to be feared above all things. We should dread his displeasure more than any other evil that could possibly befall us.

Supreme love to God is enjoined in both the Old and New Testaments. It is inculcated in the Old, not only in the first table of the law, which our Savior interprets as loving the

Lord our God with all the heart, mind, soul, and strength, but in the memorable promise, "I will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, that thou mayest live." Now, it is obvious, if any love the Lord with all their strength, that there is no temptation, which is addressed to the affections only, which can induce them to commit any known sin. The fellowship and favor of God, with such, is esteemed a greater good than all things else. No consideration can induce them to forfeit that favor; let it be wealth, however great—pleasure, however joyous—honor, however fascinating; still, God is loved and valued more than all these. Such a one, in the midst of any, or all these temptations combined, would triumphantly say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." The supreme love of God, then, may be considered as effectually securing the heart against all temptations which are addressed to the affections only.

But still it may be seen, that temptations which are addressed to our aversions, and which arouse our fears, may induce the soul to yield to sin; like Peter, who, in view of martyrdom, denied his Lord. Now, reverence, or "the fear of the Lord," includes fear, as well as love. And this we shall also find enjoined in the Scriptures: "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread." To sanctify, is to separate, or to set apart. The meaning is, that the Almighty, with all his attributes—with all his vast and unlimited resources—his great and uncontrollable power to bless or to curse—to protect or to blast, should be habitually present to the mind; and that we should ever consider that no calamity, pain, sorrow, or woe, can at all compare with the unutterable wretchedness of forfeiting the favor of God, and of inheriting his wrath; or, in a word, of committing a known sin. Hence, our Savior tells us to "fear not them that kill the

body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear : fear Him, which, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell ; yea, I say unto you, fear him." It is also plain, that, if God is thus supremely feared, no threatened evil, however great, or any number of evils, can induce that heart to sin knowingly against God, and brave his displeasure. Thus, the pious matron in whose heart "the love of God" has been "shed abroad by the Holy Ghost," and upon whom, to use a Scriptural expression, God has "put his fear," is proof against all temptations to known sin, while *supreme reverence* of God rules in her heart. She is thus "clothed with the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left." The text farther presents,

II. HER EXTERNAL CONDUCT, AS INFLUENCED BY THESE GREAT PRINCIPLES.

1. *Her conversation*: "She openeth her mouth with wisdom ; and in her tongue is the law of kindness." To open the mouth with wisdom, is to open it with prudence. There are few things more important to the reputation and usefulness of a person, than a prudent government of the tongue. And this is especially true in regard to woman. If she open her mouth with wisdom, she must open it *sparingly*. It will be impossible for a great *talker* always to speak with propriety : "*In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.*" The conversation of such may want the power to charm or instruct, but it will never want "sin." To open the mouth with wisdom, is to open it with *caution* : "I will take heed to my ways," says the pious Psalmist, "that I sin not with my tongue." And much care and *reflection* will be found necessary always to speak with propriety ; especially, as the tongue is so easily moved to action. The least stir of passion in the bosom, or the continual succession of thoughts that arise in the mind, are sufficient to prompt it to speak. Much thought, and habitual

recollection will be necessary to the performance of this duty. The recollection of the presence of God, and the aids of his grace will be requisite. Where will you find the person who has not suffered hours of bitter self-reproach, from having uttered a hasty word! It was in *haste* that the Psalmist said that "all men are liars." If the mouth is opened with wisdom, it will be opened *piously*. Her speech is with grace, seasoned with salt, and it ministers grace to the hearers. If out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, the theme of her conversation will be religion. Finally, she openeth her mouth with wisdom, because she opens it *kindly*: "In her tongue is the law of kindness." If wisdom is using the best means to secure the best ends, then, to open the mouth kindly and affectionately is true wisdom. No good purpose was ever accomplished by harsh or bitter words; especially in the mouth of a woman. Her might is in her meekness. Her power is in the sweetness of her temper, expressed by sweet words. Her heart should be the home of every angelic virtue—patience, meekness, gentleness, kindness, and tenderness; and her speech should distill as the dew—soft, fragrant, and refreshing. A scold, by the constant din of her voice, which Solomon not inaptly compares to "a continual dropping in a very rainy day," may, at first, on some occasions, accomplish her ends by merely exhausting the patience; yet she must, unavoidably, lose more than she gains. She thus exasperates kind feelings, and estranges, to some degree at least, affectionate hearts. But the woman in whose tongue is the law of kindness, is much more certain to accomplish her purposes, and always secures the confidence and affection of the whole circle in which she moves.

2. *The supervision of the moral welfare of her household*: "She looketh well to the ways of her household." The moral welfare of all under her roof lies very near her

heart; and she determines, with Joshua, that, as for her and her house, she will serve the Lord. She patiently instructs, kindly admonishes, and gently reproves. A mother's affection, care, and prudence are all employed to "train up" her children "in the way they should go"—to rear them in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord." She infuses into all hearts under her control her own gentle spirit, unaffected piety, and reverence for divine things. Neither the servant, boarder, or sojourner in her house is neglected—all are required to comply with the rules of her household.

3. *She dilligently attends to the pecuniary affairs of her family:* "She eateth not the bread of idleness." She is mistress of her own house. If poor, she sees the necessity of lightening the toils of her husband, and of aiding him in struggling for a competency. She is truly a help-mate to her husband. Is she rich? She knows that improvidence would squander her wealth. She takes the supervision of her whole house. She knows how every thing ought to be done, and she sees that it is done right. She is not afraid of compromising her dignity by being often in the kitchen. She considers nothing too small to be looked after and to be attended to. I would not degrade woman. No; I would elevate her to an angel, if desired. But I would have her a *good* angel, by all means. But good angels are "all ministering spirits."

III. HER REWARD IN THIS LIFE.

Godliness hath reward in this life, as well as in that which is to come. She not only has the approbation of God, the answer of a good conscience, and inward "peace," and "assurance," which are the immediate fruits "of righteousness," but she obtains the praise of those whose kind regards afford the most gratification to the heart of a wife or a mother: "Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband, also, and he praiseth her."

Her children, whether male or female, penetrated with gratitude at the vast and incalculable advantages derived from the instructions, admonitions, spirit, and example of such a mother, "rise up and call her blessed." How often do we see this verified in children, who, walking in the "ordinances of the Lord blameless," blessed with the peace of pardon, and the comforts of religion, prosperous in business, and of fair reputation, attribute all, under God, to the blessed influence of a pious mother! How often, in social religious meetings, do we hear God blessed for pious mothers! Not only while the good mother lives do her children bless her, but when she rests from her labors of love, in a peaceful grave, they embalm her memory with the most tender and grateful recollections. Blessed mother! and thrice blessed children in having such a mother! "Her husband, also, and he praiseth her." She secures his warmest affection and respect. Deeply impressed with her virtues and excellences, and sensible of the inestimable treasure of a good wife, he breaks out in her praise: "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." Such a wife has the full confidence and affection of her husband, or he must be utterly unworthy of the relation he sustains to her.

IV THE PERTINENT MORAL REFLECTION CONTAINED IN THE TEXT. "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

Favor here is the same as grace, and indicates that courteous demeanor and urbanity of manners which so much become a woman—or, in modern style, an accomplished lady. Now all this gracefulness may be perfectly academical: she may be indebted to the same kind of teaching for her accomplishments as she is for her skill in music or dancing. If her moral education has been neglected—if the pleasantness of her manners arises not from an enlightened mind and virtuous heart, her accomplishments

will prove deceptions. A little irritation, opposition, or disappointment, and all this mimic sweetness and gentleness is changed into wormwood and gall: the fuel of unsanctified passion is in her heart, and the fire of temptation but touches it, and it is all in a blaze. Do not misunderstand me, or Solomon, as being opposed to good manners: by no means; but I wish to be understood, that, if the virtues of a woman consist only in a few lessons in good manners, whether received at home or abroad, they are very superficial, and will be found to deceive the confidence placed in them. The fascination of an easy address, in the absence of virtuous principles, is but a painted bauble, that is likely to become an "apple of discord."

"Beauty is vain." Physical charms are, in general, more attractive than even a graceful deportment; and there are few, whether wise or foolish, who are insensible to their power. The fine complexion, regular features, and graceful form, have a powerful influence; but, however deep this impression at first, and however strong the passion it excites, yet it will be readily admitted, that the impression will be much more likely to be short-lived, than an affection which arises from an esteem and admiration of the endowments of the mind and the virtues of the heart. In fact, however beautiful one may be, and how much soever this beauty may blind the judgment, still time and circumstances, perhaps when too late, will reveal the melancholy truth, that the beautiful being was destitute of mental endowments and moral worth. Personal beauty is valuable when it is accompanied by virtue and goodness. When the beauty of the person is united with the beauty of holiness—when the softness of the complexion is joined to a tender sensibility of heart—when, in a word, the charming regularity of the features, and gracefulness of the form and manners, are but the indication of the pure, moral dispositions that govern the heart, then beauty is no longer

vain ; no, in that angelic woman there is a lovely congruity, that will bear the test of time or circumstances.

But there is another sense in which "beauty is vain," or short-lived, and one that should humble the gay and the beautiful. It is subject to a speedy decay. It "is like the morning cloud and the early dew." Disease may rob the cheek of its roseate hue, the lips of their rubies, the eyes of their lustre, and the form of its matchless symmetry. But should disease leave some remains of physical beauty, age will soon complete the work ; the complexion will lose its fascinating tints, the features become shrunk, and the voice be bereft of its music. Poor indeed is that woman who has nothing but personal beauty to recommend her ; for "beauty is vain."

"But a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." This great principle of action, "the fear of the Lord," is an excellence which no circumstances can alter—no time destroy. It is as undying as the eternal Fountain of life and love, from whence it was derived. It was a remark of one who had studied human nature, that, while the constitutional passion of man was ambition, that of woman was vanity, or love of praise. Without indorsing the justice of this remark, I would just observe, that the position of the sexes favors the development of the passions which this writer has attributed to them. Love of praise is certainly evil only when it becomes excessive. A decent respect in regard to the opinions of mankind is, unquestionably, commendable. Those persons, whether males or females, can have little self-respect, who care not what others think of them. A desire for the good opinion of mankind is, unquestionably, very general ; but woman's position in society, as I have already intimated, renders this passion peculiarly strong. Her all depends, at least before marriage, on her reputation. What people think of her, is, therefore, to her a subject of great importance. Their

good opinion is to her a treasure. Some love of praise, therefore, may be allowed her; but if she would be truly praiseworthy, let her seek, constantly and ardently, the graces of God's Holy Spirit, which will enable her to love God with all her heart, and to dread nothing so much as his displeasure. Let her make his word the man of her counsel. Let her not seek so much the "outward ornaments" by the wearing of "gold, or pearls, or costly array," as the inward ornament "of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price." Let every virtue and every grace dwell richly in her heart, and every good deed ornament her life. In this way she will not be disappointed—she will be praised. It is true that the worth of such a woman may not be appreciated by brainless dandies, or silly fops; but she will be appreciated by those whose praise will not be a scandal to her character, but rather a treasure and a diadem. But she will not only be approved by the wise and good among mankind—she will have the approbation of God; and in the world to come she will receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

V. WE ARE, IN THE LAST PLACE, TO ENFORCE THE EXHORTATION: "Give her of the reward of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates."

The benefits conferred on society by such women are incalculable. Under God, they are instrumental, to a very great extent, in forming the character of the pious families of the earth. Timothy is said to have possessed the faith that was in his "mother Lois," and "that dwelt in his grandmother Eunice." It is impossible properly to estimate all the benefits conferred on the world by such an influence. Their patience and meekness, their kindness and gentleness, their industry, economy, and cleanliness, and, above all, the purity and strength of their virtuous principles, all exert a powerfully softening and sanctifying influence on

society. We have said, (and we fear not contradiction from the observing,) that society takes its character from mothers. How great, then, is the debt which society owes to virtuous mothers! The exhortation in the text is intended to require society to acknowledge the debt, and to repay it so far as to "give her the reward of her hands," by lauding her character, and acknowledging that, although obscure, and shut up mostly in the circle of her own family, she is really conferring a greater benefit on society than many heroes whose names have been perpetuated in letters of gold. Solomon, the greatest of politicians, and the wisest of men, saw her value, and appreciated it. Solomon, did I say? The holy God of truth, who inspired Solomon, says that "her price is above rubies." Admit, then, her goodness and greatness, and hold up the virtuous maternal character as an ornament of grace and of unsurpassed usefulness.

"And let her own works praise her in the gates;" that is, let her own works praise her in the seats and fountains of power, whether in Church or state. The Christian Church has, in a laudable degree, acknowledged the extent of female influence, and appreciated it. But the importance of sanctified female influence has not, certainly, been sufficiently appreciated by the civil powers. They do not seem fully to realize that the elevation of female character, in intellectual moral endowments, is essential to the elevation of the intellectual and moral character of society—that, to a very great extent, as is the mother so is the child, and as is the child so is the man. "Let," then, "her own works praise her in the gates." Let legislators act in view of this. They provide for the education—collegiate education of our sons: why not for our daughters? Let them duly appreciate the worth of virtuous female character. Let judges on their benches acknowledge how few are convicted of crime, who have had the blessing of

an enlightened and pious maternal training. Let them proclaim to all, that the criminal list is swelled by the mother's ignorance, imprudence, and neglect. Let presidents refer to the importance of this subject in their messages to Congress. Let governors of states, under whose supervision the subject of education more immediately comes, present this important subject, in all its importance, to the legislators of our land. Grace be with you all! Amen.

SERMON XXIV

[BY REV. ZECHARIAH CONNELL.

PATIENCE.

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," James i, 4.

Of all the graces, few more adorn and beautify the Christian character, bring more glory to God, render more happiness to the Christian himself, or make him more agreeable to those around him, than patience. Men generally set their seal to this truth, though they possess not the grace themselves, and commend it to others, though, by so doing, they condemn their own practice. It is our purpose to present, as we are able,

I. PATIENCE, AND ITS PERFECT WORK.

Patience is a virtue which enables the Christian to bear afflictions, temptations, persecutions, and pains of every character and degree, with calmness of mind—with an even and unruffled temper. It prevents all complaining, or undue indications of what is suffered. There are constant occurrences, which are calculated to harass and ruffle the temper, unless the mind is under the influence of this grace. Resignation is exercised only in bearing great ills, when

the dearest interests are concerned. It is a positive sentiment of conformity to the existing circumstances, be they what they may. Patience applies only to evils that actually hang over us, and ills from which we cannot be exempted; and is connected with a firm trust in Providence, and a reliance on the promises of God, which extends its views to the future, and prepares us for the worst that may happen. It lies principally in the manner and temper of suffering, and is, therefore, more than endurance—endurance being the mere experiencing of suffering. Patience is always a Christian virtue, as it is a suffering quietly that which, under the circumstances, cannot be remedied; and, as there are many such evils incident to our condition in this state of trial, it is made one of the first Christian duties. Patience is not a cold and careless insensibility to present evils, nor an indifference to future good: it is called “a holy behavior in affliction.” Our Lord himself was not insensible to his sufferings; nor should the Christian be, though patience may keep the mind calm and steady in the discharge of duty, under a sense of sore afflictions, and in the delay of fond and cherished hopes.

Patience is sometimes called “long-suffering, or a length of mind.” In this sense, it is directly opposed to rash or hasty movements. Murmuring, complaining, repining, carking care, and peevishness, are not only weaknesses, but destructive vices—the outbreakings of our unsanctified hearts. When patience has “its perfect work,” it secures the entire possession of the soul, in every circumstance which can have any possible tendency to discompose it. Our Lord apprized his disciples of the dangers and sufferings to which they would be exposed, and then added the necessary exhortation, “In your patience possess ye your souls.” Sore and heavy trials, long delays in our deliverance, and the deferring of our hopes, often make our hearts sick; but patience places a guard around us, and

keeps our souls calm and sedate, under all the complicated afflictions we are called to endure. We are prone to form hasty conclusions and rash purposes, and to judge from present appearances; but patience forms its conclusions after sober investigation, and acts neither from the force of present troubles nor the suspension of desired good. An impatient spirit charges the Lord foolishly, and questions the truth of his promises, when they are not fulfilled in our own way, and at the time we have fixed for their accomplishment. His mercy and goodness are called in question because we are not exempted from afflictions. The language of the impatient is, "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath he forgotten to be gracious? Hath he, in his anger, shut up his tender mercies?" But the patient spirit endures the trial, rests in the promises of God, and says, "He that hath delivered will yet deliver." A patient endurance of sufferings is not without tears; but these tears are shed in hope. We may be deeply affected with all ills, and yet cast down by none—quiet in the midst of the storm, and free from alarm when tossed on the dashing wave, standing still, and waiting to see the salvation of God. The fires may burn; the waters may drown; we may be called to mourn the loss of dear friends; all around us may be murmuring; but when the grace of patience is fully exercised, all is made up in the Lord our God. The due exercise of patience, guards and fortifies us against all unlawful and rash methods of securing our deliverance from dangers, real or supposed, and hasty endeavors, by any means, to obtain our wishes. Saul, by his rash and forced measure to secure the favor of God, lost his kingdom. Patience would have restrained him from unlawful expedients, and disposed him to look for deliverance in God's own time and way: "He that believeth shall not make haste."

“The Lord will provide,” is the constant language of the patient heart, under all trials and sufferings.

It is a most essential part of patience *to enable us to persevere in the discharge of Christian duty*. Nothing short of a patient perseverance in the way of duty, can secure the fulfillment of the promises made to us. However onerous the duty, or whatever discouragements may arise, from the pressure of afflictions, or from the delays in the bestowment of God’s promised gifts, the patient spirit is submissive. The course of Christian duty must be persevered in, whatever difficulties may attend us, or whatever it may cost us. When we become impatient, we become weary and faint in our minds, and grow remiss. We must count the cost, and then deliberately and vigorously resolve to do our duty, however uncertain the results may appear. All we can do, when difficulties and dangers are actually present, or when we are threatened with them, is seriously to consider—calmly to deliberate, and, after balancing all matters, determine on a firm and faithful discharge of duty, at any sacrifice. Satan may throw hinderances in our way, the world may lay snares for our feet, and our own impure hearts may resist; but in patience we must go forward in the way of duty, resolved to conquer or die. When patience has its perfect work, we are ready to undertake hard and difficult services, if God calls us to the performance of them. Uniform steadiness of Christian conduct sometimes obliges us to go upon ungrateful errands; but we may not decline from any service of which we are capable, however great and visible the dangers that await us. Whatever is our duty must be eminently for the glory of God, and for our present and future good, though we cannot see how it can be, and should, therefore, be performed without delay—without our stopping to ask for reasons. What may be done to-day, may not be done to-morrow; and, therefore, if not done promptly, may not be done

at all. Opportunities to do all our duties come, and pass, and return no more.

Patience prepares us to do our duty in good earnest. All great things that have been done, were done by men who were in real earnest—who labored with their might; and, “after they had patiently endured, they obtained the promises.” When Israel was to be saved, a man was chosen who was ready to sacrifice a kingdom and a crown in so noble and glorious a work, “esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.” When they were to be led into the promised land, it was by a man who followed the Lord fully, saying, “We are well able to go up and possess the land.” When Jerusalem was to be rebuilt, a man stepped forward who “put not off his clothes,” aided by a people patiently continuing in well-doing. The Gospel was diffused by men of patient spirit, who counted not their lives dear unto them, that they might testify the Gospel of the grace of God. “Be ye followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.” The perfect work of patience is necessary to the existence of a zeal which is according to knowledge, and to the exercise of a diligence worthy of the cause of Christianity.

The grace of patience enables us calmly to endure temptation. It prepares us with composure to inquire for the source of temptation. Temptation is from the world, the flesh, and the devil. God never tempts to evil. No evil can proceed from him; for “God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.” However numerous and severe the temptations which come upon us, patience enables us to suffer, without murmuring or complaint, whatever God permits, and to suffer in the manner, and for the time that may please him: “Though now, for a season, (if needs be,) ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations, that the trying of your faith, being much

more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ." It leads us to take the middle way between extremes, enduring, with an even mind, sore and heavy temptations; not despising, or making light of them, as if they were owing to chance, or second causes, and were intended for no good purpose; nor yet, on the other hand, being too much affected by them, so as to sink under them. Patience does not exempt us from feeling the force of temptation. It is not a state of stoical insensibility. A patient mind is at an equal distance from fretfulness on the one hand, and dejection on the other. We should consider that our heavenly Father, when he gives us to suffering, "through manifold temptations," intends it for our good, "that we may be partakers of his holiness." One great end he has in view, in allowing us to be tempted, is "*the trial of our faith*," which is tested by this process, "as gold is tried in the fire." As by the fire gold is purified, being separated from the dross, so faith is purified by the fire of temptations. The more our faith is purified, the more it is strengthened. A patient bearing of temptation tends, also, to confirm in us "*a lively hope*." Hope is a firm and well-grounded expectation of all the privileges of the children of God. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." "To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." We shall soon, if faithful, be made more than conquerors, through Him who hath loved us, and given himself for us. And remember, "No temptation hath taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the

temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." God will always bring to us needful succor, and, in his good time, save us from being overwhelmed, and deliver us from all our fears. If we have a firm trust in our compassionate Savior, he will defend us in the hour of fiercest temptation—he will cover our heads in the day of battle.

Again: *patience fortifies us against persecutions, and prepares us to meet them without injury.* When bitterness of spirit breaks out in bitter words and reproaches from our enemies, when we are in their presence, or in saying all manner of evil against us when we are absent, patience enables us to bear it all, without indulging in a spirit of revenge—to bear it even with meekness, returning love for hatred, blessing for cursing, soft words for railing, and good for evil. That patience which enables us thus to bear tormenting, and harassing persecutions, has something in it more than human. It is not shown in a few cases only, or merely in light cases of trial; but it is so general, and so constant, and, at the same time, so astonishing in its effects, as to attract the attention and excite the surprise of our enemies themselves, and frequently to produce relents in the hearts of our most violent persecutors; for when we possess our souls in patience, we endure all persecutions—not some—not most, but absolutely *all*, of every kind and degree, and from every quarter. With whatever of injustice, malice, or cruelty they may be inflicted, we bear all calmly, rejoicing "that we are accounted worthy to suffer for Christ." We call nothing intolerable. We never say, until we have been put fully to the trial, "This is too hard—this is not to be endured." We can not only do, but we can suffer all things, "through Christ which strengtheneth us." And all we are called to suffer in so good a cause, and for the sake of Christ, is not too much for

patience to bear. It is calm in the midst of the fiery furnace—"Many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it"—it triumphs over all.

Patience, also, prepares us to *wait calmly—in every possible condition in which the dispensations of Providence or grace can place us—God's own time and way of a change of circumstances*. Long delay in his interposition in our deliverance from extreme suffering, requires the full exercise of patience. Under a long train of afflictions—of sorrows, trials, and bereavements, a man without this grace would become distracted, or sink into sullen despair. An unenlightened heathen, filled with rage and disappointment, would curse his gods, plunge the dagger to his heart, and thus steal away from his troubles. But there is, in the meekness and resignation with which Christian patience fortifies us in the day of trouble, something very different from such disappointment, despair, and rage. It is true that some kind of patience or submission is found in most of men; but not such as genuine piety produces. The patience of the men of the world is a submission to fate, and a patience of despair. But ours is "the patience of hope;" and while we possess our souls in Christian patience, which bears long, and waits God's good time, we bless the hand that gives, the hand that takes away, and the hand that will deliver, and finally place the crown of life on our heads. We may not see how, or when we are to be saved; but patience says, "Stand still, and see the salvation of God." A rich inheritance awaits us: our names shall continue when the annals of history, where the names of our enemies are registered, shall be destroyed—our reward shall be an unfading crown—our memorial will endure forever. If the work of patience in us is found to be perfect, we shall glorify God in the exercise of the grace which his hand has planted, which his Spirit has watered, and which his providence has permitted to be exercised in

the long-protracted endurance of sufferings, in the calm waiting for a release from them, and for the long-deferred object of our fondly-cherished hopes, when our great Deliverer shall say, "Well done, good and faithful servants."

We propose to notice,

II. THE RESULT OF THE PERFECT WORK OF PATIENCE:
 "That ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

God often, for wise purposes, puts our faith and graces to the trial, and, in various ways, and by means of his own choosing, tests our religion. If we stand firm in such trials, we give evidence that our religion is sound. The perfection referred to, may be a thorough knowledge of the whole will of God concerning us, and an entire willingness to do and suffer every part of his will, and the possession of every grace which adorns the true believer. Dr. Clarke thinks the expression is borrowed from the sacrifices under the law, and remarks: "The victim was perfect that was perfectly sound, having no *disease*; it was entire, having all its members—having nothing *redundant*—nothing *deficient*. Be, then, to the Lord what he required his sacrifice to be; let your whole heart, your body, soul, and spirit be sacrificed to the Lord of hosts, that he may fill you with all his fullness." Mr. Wesley gives us the sentiment in the following language: "Is the perfect work of patience any thing less than the perfect love of God, constraining us to love every soul of man, even as Christ loved us? Is it not the whole of religion—the whole mind which was also in Christ Jesus? Is it not the renewal of our souls in the image of God—after the likeness of him that created us? And is not the fruit of this, the constant resignation of ourselves, body and spirit, to God—entirely giving up all we are, and all we have, and all we love, as a holy sacrifice, acceptable to God through the Son of his love? It seems this is the perfect work of patience, consequent upon the trial of our faith."

These learned and pious authors warrant us in believing that the apostle means, by the perfection referred to in the text, *personal holiness*, or *entire sanctification*. We may be allowed to make another quotation from Mr. Wesley, as he has expressed the sentiment better than we can give it in any language of our own. He says: “‘That ye may be *perfect*.’ The apostle seems to mean by this expression, ye shall be wholly delivered from every evil work—from every evil word—from every sinful thought—from every evil desire, passion, temper—from all inbred corruption—from all remains of the carnal mind—from the body of sin; and ye shall be renewed in the spirit of your minds, in every right temper, after the image of Him that created you in righteousness and true holiness. Ye shall be *entire*. This seems to refer not so much to the kind, as to the degree of holiness: as if he had said, ye shall enjoy as high a degree of holiness as is consistent with your present state of pilgrimage.” When all this work of grace is accomplished in us, then patience has its full effect. The immediate fruits of patience, thus produced in the heart of the believer, made *perfect* and *entire*, are peace, joy, hope, and love.

This peace is not that glorious rest which remains for the people of God in his immediate presence; nor is it a rest, or outward deliverance from the troubles to which we are exposed. It is inward peace—“the peace of God which passeth all understanding”—a calmness and serenity of spirit—a tranquility of soul which human language cannot express—a peace which God only can give—“a supernatural sentiment—a divine test of the powers of the world to come:” “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” It is the peace which our Lord bequeathed to his disciples, when he said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you;” “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” The world can

afford no such peace—the powers of earth and hell combined cannot destroy nor take it away. Storms may drive, waves may beat upon us; but they shall not break our peace; for we are founded upon a rock. Our hearts and minds are kept serene at all times—in all places—in ease or pain—in sickness or health—in riches or in poverty. We are always happy in God, because in every state we have learned to be content.

Another of the fruits consequent on the perfect work of patience, is “joy in the Holy Ghost.” “Joy unspeakable and full of glory,” is wrought in our hearts by the power of the blessed Spirit of God, while we patiently endure the trial of our faith. It is no sudden flow of the spirits, or momentary transport; but it is a state of mind in which we rejoice always, with an even, solid joy, which arises from a clear witness of the Spirit of God, that we are his children. Our rejoicing is “the testimony of a good conscience.” Here, then, is the ground and nature of our joy, because we have the experience in our own hearts: “My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Savior.” It is our privilege to “rejoice evermore”—to be happy always, and in every condition in life. The religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, when it fills our hearts, removes misery and distracting cares, and fills us with joy. “He that hath God for his portion may constantly exult in the Lord—he may rejoice in the Lord evermore.” “We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

Hope is another fruit of patience, when it so works that we become “perfect and entire.” Christian hope is a lively expectation of future good, connected with a pure desire for true happiness, such as God only can give. It is a joyous prospect of that crown of glory which is reserved in heaven for us. Hope keeps us steady on the raging sea of life, and preserves us from striking upon the fatal rocks, either of presumption on the one hand, or despair on the

other. Though the world in which we live is agitated, and our course is dangerous at every step, in hope we look forward, and remember that the storm of life will not continue long, and that it will end in triumph. Our hope is fixed upon everlasting life—we “rejoice in hope of the glory of God;” and this “glory of God” is our endless inheritance—“an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for us.” This hope is “a lively hope”—a hope full of immortality and eternal life. It is “as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast;” being founded on the truth and goodness of God. And our inward experience, wrought by the perfect work of patience, proves most satisfactorily to us, that we have not misapplied our hope, nor exercised it on an improper object.

Of all the fruits or effects of patience, none is so important, and so powerful in its influence, as *love*. Indeed, love is the spring of all true happiness. It is a divine principle, implanted in the heart by the Holy Spirit, whereby we reverence, esteem, desire, and delight in God as our chief good. Love to God, includes a knowledge of his character, an esteem of his excellences, and a due consideration of what he has done for us. “We love him because he first loved us.” It is from the Scriptures that we are to form our ideas of the love of God to us, and of the love he claims in return. Love is there described in all its purity and simplicity; and the true marks by which it is known are there given. It is sincere, fervent, constant, and progressive. Love to our neighbor is an inclination to seek the happiness of our fellow-man in every possible way, and by all lawful means. “Love is the fulfilling of the law;” “The end of the commandment, is charity out of a pure heart.” When we love God for his own sake, and for his merciful dealings toward us, and contemplate his perfections and glories as the highest and most interesting objects of our thoughts and affections, we are not to love

him only, but supremely. We are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves ; that is, we must love all men, so as to desire and labor for their happiness and welfare, as sincerely and steadily as our own. We are not only to love our friends, and Christian brethren, but our enemies, “as Christ hath loved us, and given himself for us.” When the love of God and man rules our hearts, we are prepared for all the arduous duties, and distracting cares of life, and to meet without murmuring every event of the general and special providence of God. Love keeps our souls in constant and unwavering fellowship with God, and molds and fashions all other passions and affections of the heart into conformity with his will. It renders all sacrifices and sufferings for the sake of Christianity pleasant. Christ’s yoke becomes easy, and his burden light. The constant language of the heart, when our love is pure in its principle, and supreme in its degree, is, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.”

When we are disappointed, either in not receiving the good we expected, or if, when we have received what we desired, it does not meet our fond expectations, we think it would have been better if Providence had ordered it otherwise ; and we become fretful and peevish. There can be nothing more hurtful to our minds, dishonoring to God, nor more destructive to our happiness. And all this is because we do not let patience have its perfect work. A want of patient submission to the will of God, and of fortitude of soul under the varied events of Providence, with a disordered state of the passions, betrays great weakness of mind, and is unworthy of the Christian believer. When we afterward reflect calmly upon these distractions of thought, and ruffles of temper, it creates new and greater troubles of mind. Such impatience is not only hurtful to us, but sinful before God : it is fretfulness at his ways—

weariness of his government, because we cannot resist and cast off the yoke. Then we suffer only because we cannot help it—we would rebel if we could, and resist Providence if we had the power. Indulging in such tempers, we become so impatiently angry with God, that we wish for the power to pull the reins out of his hands, to take our cause into our own. When we become impatient, and allow ourselves to be broken from our anchorage, and driven off by the winds of adversity, and lose our own way, and our hearts become wrong, we think every thing about us is out of its proper place—that every person we see, and with whom we have to do, is wrong; and even sometimes we conclude that the all-wise God has mistaken his plans, and that he turns the wheel of providence the wrong way.

It is only when we are made “perfect and entire,” by the perfect work of patience, that we estimate the incomparable excellence and advantage of this Christian grace. It is a most lovely virtue—a grace which commends us to God, and keeps us his. It guards our faith, and serves as a protection to all the other graces. Our present condition, and the state of things in which we are placed, renders the exercise of it absolutely necessary, if we would live in the enjoyment of true happiness here, and be conducted to everlasting life hereafter. If we could be exempted from all suffering in this world, then there would be no need of patience; indeed, there would be no place for its exercise. But all men, high and low, rich and poor, free and bond, saint and sinner, from the king on his throne to the beggar at his gate, are doomed to labor, sorrow, pain, and tribulation. The most elevated state of piety pleads no exemption from afflictions in this life. Many evils admit of no remedy but the perfect work of patience; hence, every Christian needs this remedy. “He that endureth to the end shall be saved;” but shame, everlasting contempt, and

ruin must cover us, if we lose our patience, and refuse submission to the Almighty. It is an armor that is proof against all assaults: it bridles our tongues when we would murmur or repine: it restrains our hand when we would grasp the "chastening rod," and dash it from us. And when it makes us "perfect and entire," it makes us like God, conforms us to the image of Jesus Christ, and teaches and prepares us to "follow those who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises."

We have thus noticed some of the excellences and advantages of patience; and, as they are so desirable, and so essential to real happiness, it is for our best interest to give ourselves to the pursuit and constant practice of so noble and glorious a virtue. The example of the saints of past times is worthy of our imitation. If we look at their faith and patience, and see how they finally triumphed and obtained the promised rest, it will encourage us to patient endurance, alleviate our sorrows, ease our burdens, and give us rest even in the house of our pilgrimage. We should, also, contemplate and adore the long-suffering of God, and imitate into our daily practice the patience of Jesus Christ, who "endured such contradiction of sinners against himself."

We must at no time, nor under any circumstances, oppose our objections to the trials which our heavenly Father permits to come upon us, and indulge ourselves in saying, "We could bear any other trial but this; or, if we had been touched in any other place, or in any other way, we could have borne it patiently. If the trial had come from our open and avowed enemies, we might have been prepared for it; but it was from our professed friends, and we were taken by surprise. If we could see any way of deliverance at last, we could submit to it; but, O, our trials must continue—our evils are incurable—we must live and die in distress; or, if these afflictions did not render us

unable to perform the duties of life, or meet the calls of the Church, we could bear them calmly and without complaint; but we are rendered useless and utterly unprofitable. And, above all, if we could only have that peace, and enjoy that consolation which other Christians enjoy, and which the promises of the Gospel assure us God has reserved for the afflicted in times of tribulation, we could suffer contentedly; but, O, we have more to suffer than any other—we shall surely fall, and we may as well fall soon as late.” But we greatly wrong the providence of God, grieve his Holy Spirit, and bring wretchedness upon ourselves, by indulging in such peevish and fretful thoughts of God, and by opening such inlets to sorrow. Faith in God, and the perfect work of patience, will preserve us in every trial, and prepare us to answer every question of doubt. If we repose firm and steady trust in God, who is wise, and strong, and good, storms may arise—we may be tossed on the billows—the tumultuous and raging waves, dashing against us, may threaten to overwhelm and destroy us; but the waves and billows will only rock us to rest eternal.

SERMON XXV.

BY REV. BENJAMIN LAKIN.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” 1 John iii, 2, 3.

IN the first verse of this chapter, St. John calls upon us to behold the infinite love of God to sinners of Adam's race—that from sinners they should be made friends by

virtue of the great atonement, and through the agency of the Holy Spirit—that they should become the sons of God, by faith in Christ Jesus. And between those who are thus born of God, and the children of the wicked one, there is so great a difference, the world is as ignorant of their real character as it is of Christ: “Therefore, the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.” Then he gives us the text, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” Even while dwelling in bodies subject to innumerable infirmities, and many and various temptations, and sore buffetings of Satan, God owns the believer for his child, and treats him as such. Yet there are greater blessings and privileges for him; for “it doth not appear what we shall be.” The text leads us to consider three things:

I. THE CHRISTIAN'S CHARACTER.

II. THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE.

III. THE INFLUENCE OF HIS HOPE.

I. *The Christian character* is something more than a profession of religion; for a man may profess religion, and be a stranger to the regenerating grace of God, whereby he is formed anew in Christ Jesus; for Christians are “born not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” This high privilege is not to be obtained by human power, but by an operation of the Spirit of God, whereby the soul is renewed in righteousness and true holiness, after the image of God. In order to attain to this high privilege, the sinner must repent of his sins, know and feel his wretchedness in consequence of his transgressions against God's law, and return to God with weeping and supplication, not pleading his own merits or good deeds, but confessing his sins—his depravity and alienation from God. He must feel his inability to save himself from his wretchedness, and acknowledge that he must have help from heaven, or be undone for ever. In this situation, Christ is presented to him as a Savior able

and willing to save all that come unto him. He is now brought to believe on Christ for salvation, and obtains the pardon of his sins ; and, at the same time, the Holy Ghost renews his nature, and he is made a child of God, by faith in Christ ; and God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, “ Abba, Father ;” and being a son, he is an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ. As an heir of God, he is entitled to all the blessings God has to bestow ; and being a joint heir with Christ, he is interested in all the glories of his human nature. Yet, though so highly privileged, “ it doth not appear what we shall be ; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is.” This leads us to notice,

II. *The Christian's hope.*

Hope is composed of desire and expectation, and always has for its object some desired good, and a good unseen and future. The Christian's hope is not of a temporal, but of a spiritual nature, and rests on some promise of God that he will bestow on us the good desired. We may observe, this is not a hope that he is converted—that his sins are forgiven, and he born of God ; this is not future ; for he hath the Spirit of God bearing witness with his spirit, that he is born of God ; and this he knows, also, by the love of God being shed abroad in his heart, which causes him to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. But there are objects of hope in this life. We are subject to many temptations and tribulations—we have many sorrows and sufferings to pass through ; but in all these God hath promised a support in them, and deliverance out of them. Here hope becomes as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, and cast within the vail. In the most gloomy appearance, the promise of God cheers, and hope revives, and the believer is kept unmoved in all the storms of life. But the hope referred to in the text extends beyond the grave. It

is founded in the union between Christ and his members, attended with a belief that, when Jesus comes, God will bring them with him. There are several points in this object of the Christian's hope.

1. The appearing of Jesus, when he shall appear in the glory of the Father. When he made his first appearance, it was in the weakness of a man: his next appearance will be in the glory of God. He will, also, appear in glorified humanity—that very nature which suffered on Calvary, was laid in the grave, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven. We hope to see him, who was treated as a malefactor to rescue us guilty wretches, that we might be made the sons of God.

2. The Christian is in hope that, when Jesus appears, he shall be like him in his glorified body. He desires and expects, from the promises of God, to be as he is. Then,

“ Arrayed in glorious grace,
Shall these vile bodies shine,
And every shape, and every face,
Be heavenly and divine.”

We see him as he is, and these vile bodies shall partake of all the glories that Jesus, as a man, is invested with; for he will fashion them like unto his glorious body. How far doth this exceed the glories of the world!

III. *The influence of this hope.*

He “purifieth himself even as he is pure;” he takes no man for a copy, to follow, any farther than he follows Christ. The text supposes, there are the remains of depravity in those who are justified and born again. They are but “little children,” and are exposed to be drawn off by the allurements of the world, and temptations of the devil. But though the Christian many times feels something of sin remaining, in general, when he is justified, for a time, the remaining depravity is so far suspended, that he feels it not, and is often amazed to hear professors speak of

the remains of sin; for he has felt nothing of it. Still, under some well circumstanced temptation, he finds the remaining corruption of his heart ready to close in with the temptation, perhaps, to pride, anger, envy, the love of the world, or a desire to please men. He is now tempted to think he has been deceived, and that experience is a delusion. This continues for a longer or shorter time, as God sees fit to try him. When his gracious design is accomplished, he brings deliverance; and perhaps the first discovery, in order to his deliverance, is, that though sin *remains*, it does not *reign*; that it is his pain, and not his guilt. This gives him some encouragement. The next discovery is, that there is a fountain opened in the house of David for sin and for uncleanness, not only for the pardon of sin, but the removing of uncleanness from the heart. He then discovers that, if he walks in the light, as God is in the light, and has fellowship with his brethren, the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin. He walks in the light—he attends to the ordinances of the Lord—he reads—he hears—he prays; but the end is not obtained. He is now almost ready to sink in despair—he has done all he can, and, thus far, he has been seeking sanctification by works. Indeed, man is prone to seek the salvation of God, in every degree, by works, but in that way fails of the end. New light breaks upon his mind—he sees, as he was justified by faith in the death and sufferings of Christ, he must now be sanctified by the same means. He believes in the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin—he ventures his soul upon it—he is cleansed—the Spirit bears witness to the fact by filling it with all the fruits of the Spirit—with the perfect love of God and man. He is now happy, rejoicing in the God of his salvation, and is qualified for all the blessings that God hath in reserve for them that love him.

SERMON XXVI.

BY REV. GEORGE W WALKER.

THE FRUITFUL FIELD, AND BARREN WASTE.

“For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned,” Heb. vi, 7, 8.

The figurative language of Scripture may, in some instances, render its true import somewhat obscure; but when it comes to be properly explained, and rightly understood, it exhibits the truth in the most interesting form, and has a peculiar tendency to fix it in the mind. May these observations be verified, while we attempt to explain and enforce this highly figurative passage! The design of the apostle, in this place, appears to be, to set forth,

I. THE EXCELLENCY AND NECESSITY OF THE GOSPEL,
DISPENSED IN THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

In order to do this the more clearly and forcibly, he compares it to rain, which softens, refreshes, and fructifies the earth: causing it “to yield seed to the sower, and bread to the eater.” “For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed.” In this we are taught, that, as the seasonable showers of rain are to the earth, so is the influence of the Gospel intended to be to the moral world.

That we may be properly impressed with the beauty and strength of this figure, let us direct our attention, for a few moments, to the vast importance and indispensable necessity of the showers and dews of heaven to the earth. But for these, it would cease to yield its annual harvest, for the supply of man and beast. The most fruitful fields and gardens would become barren wastes; the fountains would

cease to send forth their refreshing streams; there would be no grapes upon the vine, nor olives, nor figs upon the trees; the herds would be cut off; the bleating race would perish, the song of the bird would cease, and the spirit of man would sink within him. So it is, where the Gospel is not preached in its purity—where the Bible is not known, and Christianity exerts no influence, or where persons refuse to receive the seed of the Gospel, or where it is received by the way-side, on stony ground, or among thorns; and, consequently, yields no fruit. In all such places, there exists a moral desolation. Infidelity, with its hydra-head, stalks abroad in the light of the sun, sowing the seed of the bottomless pit, which soon produces its legitimate fruit, called, in the text, “thorns and briers.” There is every evil word and work—pride, vanity, ambition, avarice, inordinate affection, ingratitude, disobedience to parents, profanity, lying, theft, and murder. The truth of God is denied, the Son of God crucified afresh, and the long-suffering of God made an argument against his very being. “Because judgment is not speedily executed against an evil work, the hearts of men are set in them to do evil.”

But, to keep to the figurative language of the text, we must notice, briefly, some of the benefits to the earth, of the “rain that cometh oft upon it.” Under its influence, many portions of the earth are made exceedingly fruitful; yielding, abundantly, grass for the cattle, and herb and grain for the service of man. The valleys are thickly crowded with corn; the orchards bend beneath their rich autumnal fruits; the meadows are clad in green; the fountains send forth their cooling streams; the song of the birds is heard in the fields and groves. All nature is cheerful, and innocently gay. The rolling year fills her horn of plenty, to supply the temporal wants of man. The apostle would teach, that God has not only provided for the wants

of man as an animal, but, also, as an immortal spirit, by sending him the Gospel, in all its fullness. This proffers eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, speech to the dumb, health to the sick, liberty to the captive, salvation to the lost, and life to the dead. The Gospel, when embraced, brings pardon to the guilty, regeneration to the depraved, purity to the unclean, wisdom to the ignorant, and strength to the weak—gives power over temptation, victory over death, a glorious resurrection, and a blissful immortality in the world to come. The apostle also brings to view,

II. GOD'S CARE AND MORAL CULTURE OF THE WORLD: "*Bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed.*"

Here we are to understand, that, as the husbandman cultivates his fields with great care and diligence, looking forward with desire and expectation to the time of harvest for a suitable return, so God is engaged for the salvation and happiness of man. In the figurative language of Scripture, the world is called the field, and the Lord the husbandman. The Church is spoken of as a vineyard, over which the Almighty exercises a special supervision, and of which he takes all possible care; so much so, that he challenges all whom it may concern, to show what more he could do for his vineyard, that he has not already done. But who can correctly estimate God's benevolence, as manifested toward our world? No angel mind can comprehend it. Still we ought to meditate upon it, and gain as enlarged views of it as we are able. We should look into the revelation which God has made of his mind and will, through the instrumentality of prophets, evangelists, and apostles, and which contains a perfect system of law, morality, and religion, and sets the whole duty of man, in reference to his Maker, himself, and his fellow-intelligences, in the clearest light imaginable: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all

thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." In this great work the Holy Spirit was engaged, through the long lapse of many ages—shedding light, and imparting knowledge to men, as they were willing to receive. In this work, God has, also, employed the holy angels—sending forth the glorious attendants of his throne, as the interests of his kingdom and the necessities of man required—thus keeping up a blessed intercourse between his throne and this revolted world. But God's care for our fallen world is more fully seen in "his unspeakable gift"—the gift of his only-begotten and well-beloved Son—"the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person"—to be made flesh and dwell among us—to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief—a homeless stranger—a houseless wanderer, in a world himself had made—to be mocked, insulted, reviled, and, finally, to bear the sins of the whole world in his own body on the tree. O, who can tell the agonies of the cross! There the blessed Redeemer was suspended between the darkened heavens and trembling earth—in pain extreme—in suffering beyond all human conception, for the space of three dreadful hours—when he said, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." At this all nature felt strange pangs, which made the earth tremble to her deep foundation, rent in twain the temple's vail, burst the mighty rocks, opened the graves, and awoke the sleeping dead. The centurion's marble heart felt the mighty shock, and he exclaimed, "Truly, this was the Son of God." Jesus was taken from the cross, and laid in the tomb. Then it was that the sun of hope seemed to go down upon the world. Had Christ perished in the grave, all our hopes of immortality must have sunk, and perished with him. But it was not possible that death should hold Immanuel. Hence, on the morning of the third day, he overthrew the king of terrors upon his throne of skulls, and arose, triumphantly, in all the fullness

of his Godhead, pouring a flood of light upon the graves of all the saints, and planting the flowers of an eternal spring in the wintry territories of the dead. Having showed himself alive, after his passion, by many infallible proofs, from Bethany, not far from the place where, a short time before, he had been apprehended, bound, and led away as a captive, he ascended up on high, as a triumphant conqueror, dragging death, hell, and the grave at his chariot-wheels, to appear in the presence of the Father, as the great, eternal advocate of man, and to dispense the mercies and blessings secured by his death and powerful intercession, to all who will receive and improve them. Thus it appears that angels, good men, and the triune God, are all engaged in the most unwearied efforts in behalf of this poor, fallen world.

III. THE RETURNS WHICH THOSE MAKE UPON WHOM THIS CARE AND LABOR IS BESTOWED.

Some bring forth fruit. The apostle compares such, in the text, to "the earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed." Where the Gospel is preached in its purity, there are but two characters, or classes of persons—believers and unbelievers—the faithful and the unfaithful. The people who answer God's care for them, are such as receive the seed of the Gospel in honest hearts, and bring forth the fruit thereof—thirty, sixty, or a hundred fold. The true Christian has a relish for the word of God. It is as living water to his soul. While he sits beneath the droppings of God's sanctuary, he is refreshed as with the dews and showers of heaven—he is strengthened with might in the inner man, and brings forth the fruits of holy living—he becomes prepared for every good word and work—is steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. He acknowledges God in all his ways; seeks not his own glory, but the glory of God; presents

himself—his soul, and body, and all that he has, a living sacrifice to God, which he deems his reasonable service. All such answer God's care and cost for them. But those who refuse to receive the seed of the Gospel, and those who receive it by the way-side, on stony ground, or among thorns, bear no fruit; but are like the dry desert—a barren waste; or, worse, they yield a never-failing crop of noxious weeds, thorns, and briers, and are “rejected—are nigh unto cursing, and their end is to be burned.” Is not this the miserable condition of many Gospel hearers and nominal Christians of the present day? Lord, help all to examine themselves!

IV. THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE TWO CHARACTERS UNDER CONSIDERATION.

One receiveth blessing from God; the other is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing. We have seen, that the humble-living, obedient Christian, is, to God, as the rich products of the well-cultivated field are to the husbandman. And, as the husbandman views, with interest and delight, the fruits of his fields and gardens ripening for the harvest, in like manner, but in a higher degree, does the Lord look with delight, and smile with approbation upon the plants of his own right hand planting; while, under the influence of the early and latter rain of his grace, and the genial rays of the Sun of righteousness, they are growing and ripening for the great harvest of the world. But the Lord not only looks with delight and approbation upon the people who thus improve his mercies—he also blesses them. True, they may not possess much of the riches and honors of this world; but what of that? Are there not other, and greater blessings, which the Lord can bestow—even riches and honor which are eternal? And we are taught, that the “little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked.” “A man's life,” and so of his happiness, “consisteth not in the abundance of the things which

he possesseth;" but "the blessing of the Lord resteth upon the tabernacle of the righteous," and "it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." Even what are called afflictions, work out for him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;" and he "hath hope in his death."

"But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing." This is the dreadful condition of all who do not improve the grace of God. They are rejected—they are not included in the number of his faithful and elect children—they are vile, unfit for the use of the great and good husbandman, unworthy to be gathered with the precious fruits—they are as obnoxious in the sight of God as thorns and briers are to the husbandman; nor will he take them into the garner above, any more than the husbandman would take these into his bosom as precious fruits. But they are not only rejected, they are also nigh unto cursing. This is about to fall upon them in the very way in which they chose to sin against God. The Jews willfully closed their eyes against the light which Jesus shed, stopped their ears to exclude the sound of his voice, stiffened their necks against his arms of mercy, and hardened their hearts against his tears of sympathy and kindness. What they thus willfully did against themselves and against God, he judicially sealed upon them, and left them to work out their own damnation with greediness. Thus it is, and thus it will be to the end of time. God is angry with the wicked every day. They set their hearts upon folly and dissipation, and promise themselves long life and many a delicious feast of sinful pleasure. Their morning is fair, their sun shines with unrivaled splendor, and they lanch forth on the ocean of life for a long voyage of pleasure; but ere they are aware, they have passed discretion's mark, the tempest scowls, the surges roar, blot their fair day, and sink them in the deep. The happiness they sought always

vanished at their approach, and the misery they would have shunned is now upon them in all its terrific forms.

V. THE FINAL DESTINY OF THESE TWO CHARACTERS.

That which, after innumerable showers have descended upon it, and, after all God's care and culture, remains barren and unfruitful, or, worse than such, brings forth nothing but briars and thorns, is not only rejected, and nigh unto cursing, but its "end is to be burned;" but that which bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. This, to our mind, is one of the many portions of holy writ which shows the awful difference that must eternally exist between the holy and the unholy in a future state. Here the wheat and the tares grow together; but there is a time coming when they shall be separated, even as the husbandman separates the precious fruits from the thorns and briars. But there are some who profess to believe and teach, that all the thorns and briars will finally become wheat; if not in this life, they will in the next; that is, all shall finally become holy and happy in another world, whatever be their moral course in this—no matter whether they now walk in the King's highway of holiness, having their souls adorned with all the graces of the Spirit, or whether they rush on in the filthy ways of pollution and crime, perverting the tender mercy and long-forbearance of the Lord—all—all shall finally behold the King in his beauty, and be for ever present with the Lord. Who that, in his senses, has ever read the word of God, and observed the dispensations of his providence, can believe this? Surely they who can, must be capable of believing any thing but the truth.

We are taught, in the text, that the end of that which beareth thorns and briars is to be burned. What we are to understand by this burning, and the kind of fire, may be learned from other passages of Scripture: "Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the time of harvest I will

say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn:" "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." We are told that they shall be burned with "fire unquenchable"—that "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever"—that "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched:" "For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." They shall neither grow nor multiply any longer, nor occupy the ground, but be destroyed, to make room for the undisturbed growth of the precious seed.

If there was any reason for the doctrine of annihilation, we should conclude that the judgments which will ultimately come upon the wicked would strike them out of being. But the thing is impossible, as God has destined man to live for ever. Our mode of being may be changed, but we cannot be annihilated. So far as the endless duration of man is taught in the Bible, it applies as much to the wicked as to the righteous; and the annihilation of the one is as unreasonable and unscriptural as the other. The finally impenitent will be immortal, to endure through all eternity the punishment due to their sins—not only the sin of transgressing the moral statutes of God, but also, and especially, for rejecting the great and glorious remedy which he appointed for their salvation. Awful thought!

"To talk to fiery tempests, and implore
The raging flame to give its burning o'er;
To writhe, to toss, to pant beneath their load;
And still to bear the wrath of an offended Lord."

“These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

Thus, while the “thorns and briers”—all the unholy—shall be bound in bundles, to be burned in the lake of unquenchable fire—the “herbs” which are “meet for them by whom it is dressed”—all the holy and the good—shall be gathered with joy and triumph into the garner above. We are told that there is joy, in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth; and, doubtless, the angels rejoice at every successful step the Christian takes toward his home in the skies. What, then, will be their joy and triumph in that day, when the Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven, in power and great glory, and all the holy angels with him, descending from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God—to raise the dead—gather all into one place for judgment—to investigate all the thoughts, words, and acts of all men, from Adam to his last born son—to show that no impossibility has been required at the hand of any, nothing more than their condition was equal to, in concert with his freely offered grace; and that now the wicked are to be punished and the righteous rewarded, according to their works, God thus vindicating the honor of his throne, the purity and justice of his law, the mercy and appropriateness of the Gospel, and justifying his ways to man? But who can adequately describe this scene—the winding up of the affairs of this world? The stars have faded away, the sun grown dim with age, the moon in darkness lost, earth in her orb stands still, time is no more, and the probation of man is ended. Now three august assemblies meet—from hell, from earth, from heaven—the books are opened, and all whose names are found written in the book of life take their place on the right hand of the Judge, in whom they behold their best friend—one who loved them, and gave himself for them, that he might redeem them

from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works—who believed his Gospel, received the seed, and brought forth the fruit thereof—who enlisted under his banner, fought in his name, and conquered by his blood; and now he has come to receive them to himself, that they may be with him in the place which he has prepared for them—that they may behold his glory, be made like him, and reign with him for ever and ever: but all whose names are not found written in the book of life, are filled with horror and dismay at the sight of the Judge; for they behold in him the person, whom, by their sins, they pierced a thousand and a thousand times, when he lay upon the altar as the Lamb of God; but now he is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, with power to rend and tear in pieces, and there is none to deliver. In their anguish, they cry to rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from his wrath. But it is all in vain. Rocks and mountains are all dissolving into liquid fire before the throne, and Him that sits upon it. Every one's conscience is his own accuser—the guilt of each is apparent to all. They broke the law of God, and refused to believe in the name of his only-begotten Son; and now they are condemned to death everlasting. This decision stands ratified for ever, there being no higher court to which they might take an appeal. And there is no more sacrifice for sin. The awful sentence comes from the mouth of the Judge eternal: “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;” and forthwith legions of mighty angels seize, bind, and cast them into the lake with death and hell, far beyond the reach of hope—where “their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” God save us from such an awful doom! The tares—the thorns and briers—being thus disposed of, the wheat—the children of light—appear before the Judge, who, smiling, says to them, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom

prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” And all the angels say, “Amen, alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth—let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor unto him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride has made herself ready.” Now they ascend to the mansions prepared for them, in the city of the New Jerusalem. They enter into the presence chamber of the Father of the universe, and the bride—the Church—is presented before him without spot or blemish, and the eternal union is consummated in the presence of all the angels of God. Christ is admired and glorified in his saints, and they are all glorified with him. Arrayed in garments clean and white, with palms in their hands, and crowns upon their heads, they sit down with Christ upon his throne, as he has overcome and sat down with the Father upon his throne; and they shall reign for ever and ever; for of his kingdom there shall be no end. And they need no light of the sun, nor of the moon; for the glory of God and the Lamb is the light of the city. And there is no night there, neither is there any more sorrow, nor crying; for the former things are passed away.

SERMON XXVII.

BY REV. HENRY WHITEMAN.

FREEDOM FROM SIN.

“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life,” Romans vi, 22.

“As being free from righteousness is the finished character of a sinner, so being made free from sin is the finished character of a *genuine* Christian,” *Dr. A. Clarke.*

I. SINCE THE FALL, EVERY DESCENDANT OF ADAM IS HEIR TO A SINFUL NATURE.

1. By sinful nature, we mean a natural tendency to sin—a nature which, if left without the restraints of grace, will produce evil, only evil, and that continually. The origin of this evil nature is thus given, “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;” “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave, also, unto her husband with her, and he did eat.” It is, also, further set forth by the apostle: “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” So fatal was the act of eating of the forbidden fruit, that man’s entire being felt the shock of passion’s wide control, in opposition to meek submission to the will of his Creator. Both the divine favor, and the divine image were lost, while man, degraded and overwhelmed with shame, was exiled from his native home, and doomed to obtain means of sustenance by cultivating the ground, which was cursed for his sake. He had walked erect in the garden, breathed celestial air, feasted upon unforbidden fruit, held converse face to face with his Creator, nor had known fear, or guilt, or shame, until that fatal hour in which he violated the divine precept. Bearing the image of God, himself the representative of the entire race of man, he bore the fearful responsibility of bequeathing to earth immortality, and a race of godlike possessors; or, of bringing upon the earth a curse, divorcing its inhabitants from God, and exposing them to the pains of eternal death. Soon and easily was the fatal deed performed, but vast and eternal the

consequences which followed, both to himself and his countless seed.

2. So great was man's fall, and so heavy the curse which descended upon him, that, in addition to his depraved nature, his life became encompassed with ten thousand ills; and this inscription was written upon his brow, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." Man, who, in his creation, was designed to have dominion over the works of God, himself became the slave of sin—the servant of Satan. Being sold under sin, and led captive by Satan at his will, he wandered far from God, by wicked works, and, under the impulses of his own native depravity, was hurried away, from the only source of happiness, into the regions of despair. Like some lone planet, driven from its orbit by a strange convulsion in nature, wandering in space without the controlling influence of its proper sun, until drawn into destructive contact with some distant planet, man, deprived of the favor and image of God, ceased to revolve around the "Sun of righteousness," and, being impelled by the gravitating influence of his own native depravity, was carried so far from God, and so near to perdition, that there was no eye to pity—no arm that could save, until God laid help upon One who is mighty to save, and strong to deliver.

3. Since Adam, as the representative of the entire race of man, committed a sin which produced depravity, this has become the order of nature; so that man, when he propagates his species, not only propagates the body and mind, but depravity, also, as a part of his being. It has diffused itself through all the moral faculties of the soul, and has descended, by ordinary generation, through all the race, and will continue to adhere to his nature until the last generation of man has appeared. So greatly has his moral nature become corrupted, that "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the

foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." And God saw that, as a result of this depravity, "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"—that "the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The unregenerated soul is as "a cage of unclean birds:" it is polluted by sin, and is the residence of unholy affections and desires; so that out of the heart proceedeth evil thoughts, adulteries, and every thing that defileth a man. Thus all our race may well confess,

"Lord, we are vile—conceived in sin,
And born unholy and unclean—
Sprung from the man whose guilty fall
Corrupts his race, and taints us all.
Soon as we draw our infant breath,
The seeds of sin grow up for death:
Thy law demands a perfect heart;
But we are defiled in every part."

4. So great is man's depravity, that "he has no power to do good works, which are pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing him, that he may have a good will, and working with him when he has that good will." By the fall, he is so perfectly disrobed of his original strength, or ability to do good, that he has no power to save himself from the influence and control of sin. Grace alone can deliver him from the power of Satan, restore him to the favor and image of God, and qualify him for a residence in heaven. Nor has man this grace in deposit, to use or abuse at pleasure; but while a manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal, this grace is given by the Spirit as man's necessities require, and as his faith claims and appropriates.

5. Extensive as is the depravity of every son and

daughter of Adam—as sin alone renders man the object of Divine wrath, and as his depravity is not the result of his own choice, or act, until he of choice acts sinfully, unattended by acts of transgression, no one is made the subject of eternal punishment. Man being redeemed by Christ, grace is offered, in the use of which every probationary, accountable being may reject the wrong, and pursue the right. Notwithstanding those who die in infancy or idiocy are equally the heirs of a sinful nature, yet, as they have received this depravity passively, “they are regenerated and saved by Christ,” without their performing any thing as a condition of their salvation. Actual sin alone brings the punishment of the law. Sin is that accursed thing which God hates. In every degree, and of every shade, it is perfectly hateful to Him who cannot look upon iniquity with allowance.

II. THE GOSPEL PROPOSES ENTIRE FREEDOM FROM SIN.

Salvation from sin and its consequences, as a prerequisite to ultimate salvation in heaven, is the consummation of all that is proposed in the Gospel. Even in this life, the Gospel offers liberty to the captive slaves of sin: “And thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins;” and, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Freedom from sin implies,

1. *Freedom from the guilt of sin.* A consciousness of guilt must be succeeded by a conscious pardon, or the soul cannot enjoy peace. “A wounded spirit, who can bear?” “The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.” The sword of justice is drawn, to cut the sinner down; while thunders from Sinai loudly peal, denouncing the wrath of Heaven against all who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. But mercy softly whispers, “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his

thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." The unpardoned sinner cannot be happy; for though, by close attention to worldly interests, he may, for a time, silence the whisperings of reflection, hush the voice of memory, and refuse to permit conscience to render her verdict, yet there will be intervals, in which, amidst the press of business, the intense anxiety of worldly cares and studies, and the storm of passion, these unwelcome voices will be heard. So long as he is a criminal at the bar of his own conscience, he must be unhappy; for we know that if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Man may, at times, possess the calmness of indifference—the quietude of being almost unconscious of obligation to love or obey his Creator; but this no more deserves the name of happiness than the inert resting of the mountain-rock, or the sleep of the incarcerated criminal who awaits his execution on tomorrow. Infidelity may deck with flowers its speculative theories, administer its anodynes of unbelief, in order that conscience may have an eternal sleep; but, despite their stupefying influence, amidst her disturbed slumbers, her voice will be terrifically heard, sending a thrill to the heart, and opening the eyes of the understanding to the awful realities of eternity. The happiness befitting immortal beings, can only dwell in hearts imbued with a calm consciousness of divine approbation, and an assurance of being heirs to an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

2. *From the control, or dominion of sin.* As justification, or pardon, implies the sinner's acquittal or absolution from the guilt of sin, in view of what Christ has suffered for him, regeneration implies the reproduction of spiritual life, and the restoration of the moral image of God to the soul; by which, the soul is possessed of pure and holy

affections. The difference between justification and regeneration may be shown thus: Suppose a person to be incarcerated in the state's prison. A petition is presented to the governor, and he is pardoned. He returns home, sustaining a justified relation to the laws of his country, and is entitled to all the privileges of an unoffending citizen, but is, perhaps, the same demon-like and blood-thirsty being that he was before he was pardoned. Thus, should God pardon all our sins, and we remain unregenerate, though our relation to God's laws would be changed, our moral character and corrupt nature would remain essentially the same. We believe that God's gracious smile of pardon is, generally, if not always, accompanied with that operation of the Spirit by which the soul is regenerated—that the acts are simultaneous, though the blessings are so distinct that all may mark their difference. The one produces a change in our relation to God and his laws; the other a change in our hearts. The one frees us from the guilt of sin, and the other from the controlling influence of sin, and renews us in the moral image of God.

3. *Regeneration is sanctification begun.* Entire sanctification implies an acceptable consecration of all the powers of soul, spirit, and body to the service of God; and that all the affections of the soul are perfectly, constantly, and sweetly controlled by grace; so that we reckon ourselves dead, indeed, unto sin, and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Sin no longer has dominion over us. While "we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." We are witnesses for Christ, when sin in us is all destroyed. There is nothing in all the dominions of Jehovah, which has efficacy sufficient to remove the pollutions and extract the seeds of sin, but the blood of Christ. Nor is there any agent that can apply this all-efficacious blood to a penitent heart,

but the Holy Spirit. Vain is the interposition of popes or priests: the blood is divine, and the agent must be divine, in order to produce such a divine change. The depravity of the human heart is so deep, that

“No running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Can wash the dismal stain away.”

Such is man's native imbecility and death in sin, that nothing can produce or perpetuate moral life in him, but the life-giving Spirit. Christ came that he might destroy the works of the devil; and having died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, he has led captivity captive, given gifts unto men, and ascended to the right hand of the majesty in the heavens, where he ever liveth to make intercessions for us. “Wherefore, he is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by him.” The blood of Christ cannot increase in efficacy, nor the spirit in ability to apply it; and, “as all things are possible to him that believeth,” we may receive the application *now*, which shall make us every whit whole—entirely clean, and free from sin.

4. *In regeneration, the soul is made free from the control of sin, and all the graces of the Spirit are implanted in it.* But while the constellation of the Spirit's graces is complete in point of number, they are small and feeble, and must be nursed or cultivated with much tenderness and care; lest, for want of depth of earth, they perish; or, the seeds of sin springing up, so choke them as to prevent their growth, and, perhaps, cause them to die. In consequence of the feebleness of these graces, and of remaining hereditary depravity, the Christian is conscious of “motions of the flesh” and impulses of the mind, which, if complied with, would break forth in sinful thoughts, words, and actions. He, therefore, feels the necessity of a more perfect consecration of himself to God, and of having the man of sin slain by nailing him to the cross, that these graces may

expand and strengthen, until he come to the perfect stature of a man in Christ Jesus. As sin and the unhallowed influence of sinful nature alone impede the growth of these graces toward that perfection of which they are capable, he, alone, who has experienced the entire sanctification of soul, spirit, and body, is prepared for an uninterrupted growth in grace, and the full enjoyment of Gospel love and peace. Grace not only removes the fetters with which sin has so tightly bound the soul that it cannot freely breathe celestial air, but imparts the Spirit's power, by which the soul expands in moral life, and ever approximates the moral perfections of Deity. Entire sanctification does not imply a completion of the work of grace, but the destruction of the body of sin, and the entire consecration of the soul's maimed and crippled powers to the service of God. There may still be a growth in grace. The soul originally possessed capacities and powers, of which we can now have but an imperfect conception. These have been misdirected and enfeebled by the introduction of depravity and sin. Entire sanctification destroys sin and depravity, and restores these energies to their original direction and mode of action. Thus, the causes of their feebleness being removed, they, by grace, expand not only to their original power, but illimitably, as the soul is assimilated to the moral likeness and perfections of Christ.

III. ALL WHO ARE MADE FREE FROM SIN HAVE BECOME SERVANTS TO GOD, BEAR FRUIT UNTO HOLINESS, AND ARE HEIRS OF EVERLASTING LIFE.

1. *They are the servants of God*, and, as such, seek not their own will, but the will of him who has sent them to labor in his vineyard. They seek to employ all their time, talents, and influence, in promoting his cause. His service is their delight:

“For Jesus day and night employed,
His heritage they toil to clear.”

To them his yoke is easy and his burden light. His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace.

2. *They bear fruit unto holiness.* "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit; wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them." Being grafted into Christ, the living vine, they partake of the root and fatness of the vine; and "if the root be holy, so are the branches;" and if the branches are holy, so, also, is the fruit. Abiding in Christ, and Christ abiding in them, they bear much fruit—much holy fruit.

3. *They are heirs of everlasting life.* As children of God, they are assured of their heirship to an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for them. While in their minority, as children, they endure chastisement; for whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. As obedient children, they endure hardness, even as good soldiers, having respect unto the recompense of reward—the promised inheritance. They glory in the cross of Christ, knowing that, if they suffer with him, they shall be, also, glorified together, and that the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in that day, when they shall be installed as kings and priests unto God and the Lamb for ever. Fondly as we cling to life, were the Christian assured that this life was to be eternally perpetuated, in connection with its infirmities and sorrows, it would deprive him of his richest joy and brightest prospects. Yea, he could not so much as endure the thought; but, with an imploring look, and in tones of sorrow, would repeat the sentiment,

"I would not live alway; I ask not to stay,

Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way."

But being well assured that, when the few remaining years of his pilgrimage have passed away, he shall receive a

release from earth, and a passport to heaven, where he will for ever dwell, associated with the spirits of just men made perfect, and with angels, and be in the immediate presence of God and the Lamb, he with transport sings :

“ In rapturous awe, on him I'll gaze,
Who bought the sight for me;
And shout, and wonder at his grace,
To all eternity.”

SERMON XXVIII.

BY REV. WILLIAM HERR.

THE REASONABLENESS AND NECESSITY OF THE DIVINE LAW,
AND THE BLESSED RESULTS OF OBEDIENCE.

“ O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea,”
Isa. xlviii, 18.

THE purport of this chapter is a solemn expostulation of Jehovah with the Jews, for their wickedness in forsaking him, and their folly in withdrawing their trust from him, and placing it in idols. He shows their foolishness, in attributing that to the agency of idols which was manifestly the work of his own hands; and, also, the impotency of their idols, when contrasted with the divine prescience and power. He, also, tenderly appeals to former manifestations of his goodness in their behalf; and would thus provoke them to obedience, assuring them of assistance, beautifully represented by images borrowed from the exodus from Egypt—that as, in former times, “they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock, also, and the waters gushed out;” so, in like manner, he would deliver them from all their enemies, by his gracious interposition.

With this brief view of the import and scope of the chapter, I shall proceed to an examination of the text, noticing,

I. THE MORAL GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

II. THE BENEFITS RESULTING FROM OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S LAW.

I. *The moral government of God* is implied in the exclamation in the text, "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments!"

It is evident that Jehovah could not require his creature, man, to hearken to his commandments, unless they had been announced; and they would not have been given, unless it was his intention that they should be obeyed. With regard to the commandments of God, too few have a proper conception of them. It may not, then, be amiss to say, that they are admirably adapted to our condition as moral agents, and, so far from being burdensome, require nothing more at our hands than what we are fully capacitated to perform, and what is in accordance with our best and dearest interest; for He who makes the requirement, has promised assistance, in order to our rendering obedience, and expressly invites all who are heavy-laden to come unto him for rest, assuring them that they shall find his yoke easy and his burden light. It is presumed that none will deny God's *right* to govern, implied in the text; for he who is superior in all things—who has brought us into existence, and continues to preserve us, is, doubtless, entitled not only to our gratitude, but cheerful obedience.

The commandments of God are not imposed, to restrain us in the use of our mental or physical powers, in the pursuit of happiness, but for the purpose of keeping us from the commission of sin, which is the bane of human felicity, stopping the current of our joys, which an observance of these commandments tends to enlarge. Look at society. What would be the condition of man, unrestrained by

human laws? In the language of one, imagination must cower her wing, unable to fetch the compass of that depth of guilt and iniquity into which the human family would plunge. Man, unrestrained by law, would speedily become the victim of anarchy, confusion, and distress.

If, then, in the management of matters which are in a great degree subordinate, government is so necessary, we would put the question to every intelligent mind, where is the inconsistency or unreasonableness of God's moral government—of a code of laws framed for the rule of our conduct, more just than ever originated in the mind of the wisest jurisconsult? where the injustice of God in rewarding us according to the deeds done in the body, by bringing the obedient to inherit eternal life, and consigning the disobedient to everlasting punishment? Leaving these questions to be answered by the unprejudiced, we inquire, what would be the condition of things, if God's moral government were laid aside, and the divine jurisdiction unacknowledged? in a word, if such opinions were afloat and fully believed, as that, when man dies he ceases to be; that there is neither a heaven nor hell; or, in the language of infidel Hume, "that all the religions which have prevailed in the world, are nothing more than sick men's dreams, or the playsome whimsies of monkeys in human shape, rather than the serious, positive, dogmatical asseverations of a being who dignifies himself with the name of rational?" Alas! the bloodiest page in the history of the past will fully attest. Turn your attention to France, at that period when God's law was trampled in the dust—when the jurisdiction of heaven's high King was unacknowledged. Another such scene of confusion and bloodshed the world never beheld. Vice triumphed over virtue; innocent citizens, parents, and defenseless youth, were torn from each other's embrace, and hurried to the fatal guillotine, to swell that mighty torrent of human gore which deluged the streets of

Paris. It seemed as though the vials of divine wrath were poured out upon that infidel city—as though the inhabitants were made the punishers of their own iniquity ; and nothing but an acknowledgment of a supreme Ruler of the universe and of his law, could possibly have restored this people to the peace and tranquility which they formerly enjoyed.

Hence, it will be perceived that there is a necessity for some rule by which human agency shall be regulated. But does one inquire, “Where is that rule to be found, the observance of which will make for my peace and eternal welfare?” I answer, in the Bible. Harken to the commandments of the Lord ; walk in them ; then shall thy peace be as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea. In the word of God the path of duty is clearly indicated, and we are called upon to walk in it, assured that it is a path of peace and safety. To it we are wooed in the melting tones of the Redeemer, and warned not to depart from it by the most emphatic and unequivocal language of inspiration. To secure our best interests, there is an uncontrollable necessity in our rendering obedience to the divine law ; for if God be what he declares himself to be—a rewarder of the just and a punisher of the unjust—if his government be exercised in truth and righteousness, it follows as a natural consequence, that, if there be an infringement of his law, on the part of any of his moral subjects, the hottest indignation and wrath, if they persist in their rebellion, must inevitably be their portion for ever.

It is natural for all to expect to receive good at the hands of God, if they act according to his will ; but the same principle that prompts to this expectation, and the same reason that sustains such a hope, assure us that, if any fail to comply with the precepts of God, as the slothful servant who knew his master's will but did it not, was beaten with

many stripes, they shall meet that punishment which their sins deserve. Every thing, therefore, that can interest our feelings; that has claims to truth and reason, tells us that God's moral government is just; that in the very nature of things there is a necessity for it. If virtue is to be rewarded, there must be something to point out in what virtue consists; and, if virtue be acceptable in the sight of God, its opposite is not; and if not, then it also has a reward, which is, in the nervous language of the apostle, "Everlasting punishment from the presence of God and the glory of his power."

To sum up the whole, in a comprehensive view, we may say, the government of God here implied, is an act of necessity, issuing from the nature of things—brought into effect by the wisdom of Jehovah—binding upon the will and conscience of his people—guarantying the fulfillment of the most gracious promises of future felicity, in case of obedience, and solemnly assuring us that, unless we yield to the spirit of truth, we shall be cast, with the hypocrite and unbeliever, into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. We are entreated by our heavenly Father to turn from the error of our ways, with the promise, "He that walketh in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly, he is just: he shall surely live," and with the fearful declaration, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O house of Israel!" Thus, you perceive the deep and ardent solicitude God has for man's happiness. Whether he is walking in the broad road to ruin, or in the strait and narrow path of life—whether he is bewildered in the superstitions of Egypt, or wrapt in the lofty visions of Plato, the eye of God is upon him; and every act of his providence and manifestation of his grace, speaks in language not to be mistaken, that he has no pleasure in the death of

the wicked, but would rather that all should turn and live. We proceed to consider,

II. *The moral benefits resulting from obedience to God's law*: "Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."

1. Here, my brethren, is a gracious promise, that if you render obedience to God's law, your peace shall flow as a river. The term peace is here taken in contradistinction to a state of grief and misery. Whatever tends to promote our peace, we are inclined to lay hold of with all the ardor and energy of our soul. Here, then, is an object which will insure the first wish of our hearts—which will tend to present and future felicity. It cannot but be manifest, that, without some degree of pleasure—without some alleviation of the ills which are incident to life, we should be unable to endure with resignation our various misfortunes. For proof of this, we appeal to the experience of all men. Now, where there is a constant violation of God's law, there can be no peace; and where there is no peace, there is no happiness; and so far from being content in this condition, man suffers far beyond our feeble powers to paint. We are willing to admit, for the sake of argument, that man, in a state of rebellion against God, enjoys what the world calls peace and pleasure; but, at the same time, he is entirely destitute of real and substantial bliss. He is destitute of that peace which arises from a conscience void of offence toward God and man—that peace which flows as a river, refreshing the soul, and bearing it onward, with hope and heavenly aspirations, to the haven of eternal repose. The son of Bacchus may tell us that he enjoys peace and pleasure in his midnight revels—the debauchee may boast of his sensual delights—of the gay round of his entertainments: he may smile in the midst of his excesses; but it is the haggard smile of the wretch, whose heart is callous—whose mind is lost to every high and holy influence,

and who, in the end, must sink, the victim of his own folly, to reap the bitter fruits of chagrin and disappointment.

Not so with those who hearken to God's commandments, and obey them. Their peace is as a river. In the midst of all their afflictions it flows on uninterruptedly; for God, "willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." Thus, we urge you to obedience to God's righteous law, not by any mere representation of our own, but we plead the promise of God himself. And, blessed be God! the living oracles are full of these gracious promises. At every step in the contemplation of these heavenly pages, we meet with words that can cheer, animate, and influence us in the pursuit of all that is "virtuous, and lovely, and of good report."

The figure here used is expressive of the *increasing* peace we shall enjoy, if we continue obedient. To illustrate this part of the subject: go with me to the Alleghany mountains, and I will show you a small stream issuing from its base, scarcely sufficient to quench the thirst of the weary traveler and his beast. But pursue that stream in its course, and at length you will stand on the banks of the mighty, rolling Ohio. Thus, as the soul continues to hearken to God's commandments, its peace increases. How refreshing, then, to the weary—how encouraging to the Christian! Whether riding upon the calm sea of prosperity, or breasting the adverse surges of misfortune, he can enjoy peace uninterrupted and increasing. He is buoyed above the waves of despondency, under the firm assurance of being finally brought where sighing and weeping shall be no more, and where, in the full fruition of

God's infinite goodness, he will taste peace hitherto unknown, be led forth to green pastures, and drink of those living streams which issue from the eternal throne, and make glad the city of God.

2. Another benefit resulting from obedience is stated in the text: "Righteousness as the waves of the sea." We understand the language to mean, a freedom from any attributable evil punishable by the just law of God; or, in other words, a state of moral purity, which, at all times, makes us acceptable in the sight of God. This moral purity all must, and all may have. It is embraced in the covenant of promise, and is produced by the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, through faith in the blood of atonement. But none are entitled to this promise, or can possibly enjoy this state, but those who are the willing subjects of God's just government. Those who follow on to know the Lord, shall enjoy the early and latter rain; their path shall be as the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day. And as the sea is free from corruption, and constantly active, so shall those who hearken to God's commandments be kept pure and active, by the operative and sanctifying influences of his Spirit, at all times enjoying peace, and ripening for an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

The metaphor conveys to our minds an idea of the *extent* of our righteousness; that, as "the waves of the sea" wash every shore, so the obedient shall feel the influences of the Holy Spirit, laving all their powers in the blood of sprinkling, and imparting life and beauty to the soul. This river of peace, of which we have been speaking, is free to all; this righteousness is the inheritance of all God's children. And, to sum up the whole, by way of general exemplification, it is the same stream which first burst forth on the day of Pentecost—which has found its way amidst persecution and torture—amidst the dark ages

of monkish superstition, opposing bigotry, and fanaticism—amidst the wrathful reign of the bloody Mary, cheering the heart of the martyr; and which has continued to advance until, in our day, its influence is felt in almost every clime, dispensing health and vigor to the whole family of man.

A few remarks and we close.

1. From this subject we learn that peace and obedience are inseparably connected. Have you, then, hearkened to God's commandments? If you have, your experience confirms the foregoing remarks; or, at least, you realize, to some extent, the blessedness of obedience. Be entreated not to rest short of all the graces of God's Spirit, and, by a full and perfect surrender of your entire being to the service of God, enjoy for yourself the utmost extent of the divine fullness. Let your progress be constant—your service unremitted, and aspire to the glorious consummation of an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2. We learn from this subject that disobedience exposes the soul to God's displeasure, and inevitably brings misery. None can enjoy peace who refuse to recognize the divine authority: "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." Men may now treat with neglect and contempt the authority of God; they may slight the offers of mercy, turn a deaf ear to the invitations of the Gospel, and pervert the long-suffering of God; but the time is coming when he will assert his dignity, and vindicate the sovereignty of his throne—when he will set himself against his enemies, and destroy the workers of iniquity. Now, by the ministry of his word, he warns the sinner to flee from the wrath to come, and invites him to lay hold of the hope set before him in the Gospel. He manifests himself, in Christ, in the benificent work of reconciling the world unto himself. But when once the long-suffering of God shall have been

exhausted, and, in the terror of his justice, he shall appear against the enemies of the cross, then ruin and dismay shall seize the guilty rebels of his throne, and justice—long insulted justice, will demand the execution of the penalty of violated law: “Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I, also, will laugh at your calamity: I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore, shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.” O, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Better that a man had not been born—better to lie at the mouth of a burning volcano, or be rocked on the bosom of an earthquake, than to meet the insulted majesty of heaven and earth, with guilt uncanceled and unforgiven. It has been said that the terror sitting on the brow of a tyrant made a nation quake; but, believe me, there sits a terror enthroned on the pages of this peaceful volume, that can fill a guilty world with dismay. And yet it is not the terror of tyranny, but the terror of God’s immutable justice—that justice which links vice and misery together—which hurled the rebel host over the battlements of heaven, and consigned them to hell, “reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.” And if God, at any time, has given such fearful proofs of his displeasure toward those who violated his law, what reason have we to suppose that he will relax his claims, or fail to vindicate his honor or the integrity of his throne? None at all.

When did God fail to execute his threatenings? Did he fail when Adam put forth his impious hand and plucked of the forbidden fruit? Did he fail when he destroyed the world with a flood? or when he overthrew the cities of the plain? Did he fail when he poured out his judgments on his own chosen people, and wrath came upon them to the uttermost? No, no; "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. . . The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth, also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" Let the threatenings, the forbearance, and patience of God, move you to obedience, repentance, and faith: "For how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." O, sinner, why will you persist in rebellion against your rightful Sovereign? why will you still pursue sin's destructive way? why will you rush on the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler, and plunge naked into "the blackness of darkness," rather than bathe in the perennial streams of peace, and enjoy the smile and benediction of Heaven? Can you measure arms with the Almighty? Can you dwell in everlasting burnings? Can you endure the wrath of God for ever and for ever? Pause—pause. Harken thou unto the commandments of God. This moment lay down your

weapons of rebellion, and sue for mercy in the name of Jesus. Behold, he now waits to be gracious. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." May God move you by his Spirit, and may you haste to the mountain before it is everlastingly too late! Amen.

SERMON XXIX.

BY REV. THOMAS THOMPSON.

MINISTERIAL PIETY ATTENDED WITH REVIVAL INFLUENCE.

"For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord," Acts xi, 24.

IN the character of the man of God, referred to in the text, and whose labors were so signally crowned with the divine blessing, we have essential qualifications brought to view, which cannot fail, through the same attendant influence, to be equally successful in our own times.

That we may profit by this narration, let us consider,

I. THE MINISTERIAL QUALIFICATIONS OF BARNABAS.

The natural qualifications of Barnabas for his holy calling, are not particularly brought to view in the text. Whether a Cephas, or an Apollos, we are not told; but his moral qualifications are exhibited in the following order:

1. "*He was a good man.*" By the appellation good, or goodness, we may, first, understand that personal piety, so conspicuous in the temper and general deportment of this man of God. Here we have the proof of regenerating grace—of a heart emptied of self and sin, and rendered the source whence emanates practical virtues. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are

passed away ; behold, all things are become new ;” “ A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good ;” “ Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them.” Goodness—what an excellency ! Eloquence and knowledge are important ; but what do they avail where piety is wanting ? We have heard the fame of some ministers, for rare gifts, trumpeted abroad on every breeze ; but where little of intellectual greatness is found, we often hear it said, he is a “ good ”—a holy man ; and here we look for and find the golden fruit—the real success ; and here the Savior’s sayings are truly applicable, “ Ye are the salt of the earth ;” “ Ye are the light of the world ;” “ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” And though the private Christian needs this heavenly adorning, yet how important in the minister of the Lord !

(2.) By a “ good man,” we may understand, a benevolent man. Commenting on Romans v, 7, Dr. Adam Clarke renders the expression, “ good man,” a *benevolent* man. This definition is strictly applicable to Barnabas. Born in Cyprus, an island of the Mediterranean, visiting Jerusalem (as some suppose) at the feast of Pentecost, by the preaching of the apostles he is converted—sells his land, and brings the sum thus obtained and lays it at the apostles’ feet—not a part, Ananias-like, but the whole sum—thus, at once, commiserating and supplying the necessities of the poor, persecuted followers of his Lord. The benevolence toward a suffering and perishing world, begotten in the heart of this converted Levite, is needed by every minister of the Gospel, that he may be prepared to leave “ father and mother, wife and children, brethren and sisters, houses and lands, for Christ’s sake ;” and, bidding farewell to earthly honor, emolument, and ease, employ his energies in promoting the temporal, spiritual, and eternal interests of

his fellow-men. "Charity seeketh not her own." Who, that has claims to true piety, has not learned this lesson? Who is fit to administer in sacred things, who makes not, cheerfully, this sacrifice? "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."

2. *He was "full of the Holy Ghost."* Allusion is not so much made, we apprehend, to the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, as the indwelling of the Spirit—happifying the soul, illuminating the understanding, correcting the judgment, subduing the will, hallowing the affections, purifying the conscience, and captivating the thoughts; thus sanctifying the whole man: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;" "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge; that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." The Divine Spirit directs him in the path of duty, and inspires him with wisdom to confound gainsayers: "Settle it, therefore, in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist." Who can successfully preach Christ till he is called and anointed from on high? who can fully preach Christ till he is filled with the Divine Spirit? enabling him to say,

"What we have felt and seen,
With confidence we tell;
And publish to the sons of men,
The signs infallible."

3. *He was "full of faith."* 1. He had full trust and

confidence in God in reference to his own salvation—living in the exercise of that grace from day to day: “Now the just shall live by faith.” 2. His faith gave him victory over the world: “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.” How important for him who starts out without “purse and scrip,” or stipulation for bodily support, that he exercise abiding confidence in a munificent Providence! Was it not to call forth such confidence on the part of the disciples, that Christ, in their presence, fed such multitudes with a few loaves and fishes, and that he pointed to the fowls of the air and the lilies of the vale, as objects of Providential care? 3. His faith enabled him to resist and overcome the wicked one: “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked.” 4. It enabled him fully to rely on the promise, “Lo, I am with you always.” His was a faith in Him who alone can succeed the most pious efforts. Saith an inspired apostle, “I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.” Who can forego the privations, endure the labors, meet the frowns, and discharge, faithfully, all the duties of the minister of Christ, without a faith like that of Moses, which enabled him to “endure, as seeing him that is invisible?”

II. His success: “*Much people was added to the Lord.*”

He not only had cause to rejoice in witnessing the effects of divine grace, in the conversion of Grecians, at Antioch, through the instrumentality of his countrymen, but his own labors, it would seem, were blessed in the salvation of many more: “Much people was added,” not merely proselyted to an opinion, creed, or sect, but “to the Lord.” Convicted for sin—converted from the error of their ways, they joined the band of young converts, or the first-named “Christians” in that city. Though they had been “aliens

from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, without God and hope in the world," and sometime thus far off, they were now "made nigh by the blood of Christ"—"fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God"—"sons and daughters of the Lord almighty." O, blessed union!—not only *servants* but *sons*. Thus this man of God run not in vain: he went not a warfare at his own charges. The Holy Ghost, who had called, qualified, and separated him from worldly avocations, accompanied the word, through him, with power from on high, so that many sinners were saved, and "added to the Lord." So extensive was this work, that it became necessary to have more laborers. Barnabas, therefore, goes in quest of Saul, to Tarsus, and brings him to Antioch, with whom he unites in preaching the word, and building up the young converts, for a whole year. It is easy working where the Lord works; and how Scriptural the old Wesleyan plan—where the Lord's work revives, send the more laborers?

By this narrative, the minister of the Gospel is encouraged to labor to win souls to Christ. His work is to teach men to live well, and to die happy. His praying, reading, studying, searching for knowledge—knowledge of men—of the world—of science—his correct thinking and speaking—all—all should point to this end. The multitude are yet in the "broad way"—in the "region and shadow of death," hurrying to the gulf of endless woe: "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;" "The love of Christ constrains us,"

"With cries, entreaties, tears, to save—
To snatch them from the gaping grave."

How awfully responsible the place occupied by the minister of the Gospel—"the blood of souls required at his hands!" About to give an account of his stewardship, let him, as a son of thunder, "cry aloud, and spare not." As

a son of consolation, let him blend in his exhortations the sweet scheme of a Savior's love. What a principle, here, by which to be actuated! What a motive to stimulate! Well might Paul say, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified"—"to count all things but loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord," and to glory in nothing save the cross of Christ.

Man of God, hast thou assumed this awfully responsible position? Take care that the love of souls is near thy heart. O rest not satisfied till thou art wise in winning souls! Then, what woe prevented, what bliss secured! "Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

This subject gives infallible direction, touching the moral qualities requisite to be instrumental in the salvation of immortal souls—the heart imbued with all that appertains to goodness, filled with every virtue—every grace. "Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity: for if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." This subject, also, assures the minister that it is his privilege to have the abiding presence, indwelling witness, comfort, assistance, direction, unction, and agency of the Divine Spirit, to cheer his heart, strengthen his hands, and to succeed his efforts to evangelize the world—not in a sense opposed to man's moral agency; for, as the word did not profit ancient Israel, "not being mixed with faith in them that heard it," so it may be in his ministrations. It is said that the Savior, in his own country, did not many miracles, because of their unbelief.

Lastly, this subject teaches us the importance of having the heart inspired with living faith: no self-confidence, but faith in God—in his omnipotent power, to defend, support, and help, in time of need—faith in his infallible wisdom to council and direct—faith in his justice to vindicate and avenge our wrongs, to maintain our cause, and to reward our labors of love, and sincere endeavors to do good in the world—faith in all his infinite perfections; for all are pledged to make the good man blessed in time, and to all eternity. “There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the Gospel’s, but he shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life.”

To the angel of the Church of Smyrna it is said, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” Consider, dear brethren, the importance of your work; follow this example of piety and usefulness; then shall it be said of you, whether you possess one, two, or five talents, if not in life, yet after you have gone to your reward, as of Barnabas, “He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith; and much people was added unto the Lord.”

SERMON XXX.

BY REV ELIJAH H. FIELD.

REDEMPTION.

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us,” Gal. iii, 13.

IN this, and the preceding verses, the apostle is proving the doctrine of justification by faith, from which the

Galatians had departed, from the severity of the law, and the redemption from it by Christ. In speaking upon the text, I shall notice,

I. THE LAW.

II. ITS CURSE.

III. OUR REDEMPTION FROM THAT CURSE.

I. *The law.*

Law contemplates two parties: one governing, the other governed. The one possesses power and right; the other is dependent, and owes allegiance. It expresses the will of the ruler, and is the rule of duty to the subject, as well as the standard by which he is to be judged. Its object is to promote the welfare of the subject, and the integrity of the government.

The law in question is that which was given by God to Adam. It is said to be "holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." To be just in its claims, they must be limited to the ability of man, requiring no more than he can perform; otherwise, a failure would be inevitable, and man could not justly be blamed. At the same time, the law may justly require all that man can perform; and, indeed, must do it, in order to secure the integrity of the government; for if man, or any other creature, had been endowed with supernumerary powers, the use of which God did not claim and exercise the right to control by law, the creature, in the use of such powers, might do what he pleased, disturbing the harmony of the universe, and introducing confusion and every evil work with perfect impunity. The law is said, by some, to be infinite in its claims, because,

1. It is a transcript of the Divine mind.
2. Because sin—the transgression of the law—is infinite, being committed against an infinite Being—subjecting the sinner to infinite punishment.

To all which we answer: as infinitude expresses unlimited being, or existence, it can, with strict propriety, be predicated of God and space only. As, therefore,

the law is not God, it is not infinite. Nor is it infinite in its claims; because they are limited to the abilities of a finite creature. None but God could keep an infinite law. Had the law been infinite, man must, of necessity, have failed to keep it, and the Lawgiver alone been responsible for the consequences. Nor is sin infinite, nor an infinite evil; because it is an effect of a finite cause—the act of man; and as no effect can exceed its cause, it is finite. Nor will the fact that sin is committed against an infinite Being magnify it to an extent greater than man, its cause. A pebble thrown against a rock, would, on that principle, be as large as the rock. Nor is the punishment of sin infinite; because it cannot exceed the capacity of the sufferer, as to extent, nor the sinner's existence, as to duration; therefore, as the sinner's capacity is limited, and his existence had a beginning, and is limited, also, the punishment of sin is finite, though never-ending.

II. *The curse of the law.*

To render law effective, it must have a penalty. In the present instance, the penalty is death. When God gave the law to Adam, prescribing his conduct, he said in reference to the interdicted tree, “In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” The slightest infraction of the law was sufficient to incur the penalty; and this, when incurred, could not be avoided by the sinner, nor removed; so that he must remain beneath the curse world without end. This death includes the loss of God's favor, and image of “righteousness and true holiness,” in which man was originally created, and of communion and intercourse with him—the loss of power to keep the law in future, and of the disposition to keep it, even if he had retained the power, being “inclined to evil, and that continually;” and, also, “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” The scheme of redemption presumes all this. Is it objected that “there is no proportion

between the crime and the penalty, and, therefore, the law is unjust, or the view above given incorrect; and, in either case, we are not in danger, since God is just and good?" We answer: 1. Although the crime be considered exceedingly diminutive, and the penalty inconceivably great, there would be no injustice in executing it, because the creature was under no necessity to sin—the law requiring no more than he could do. And if, under such circumstances, forewarned of consequences, he wantonly violated right, defying both the justice and power of God, for the small satisfaction of doing wrong in the smallest degree, thus exhibiting, in strongest light, the rebellious principle, he has no reason to complain of the magnitude of the punishment. 2. God had a right to create such beings, and endue them with such capabilities as he pleased. And he had an equal right to require at their hands all that they could do; and since he *did not*, and justly *could not* require any more, he had an equal right to enact, and inflict upon the sinner, for transgressing the law, whatever penalty he pleased—of whatever kind, or degree of intensity, or duration. This, it is presumed, will not be controverted.

III. *Our redemption from the curse of the law.*

This includes the necessary constituent qualities of the Redeemer, and the manner in which redemption was accomplished.

In consequence of man's disobedience to the law, he fell under its curse; and when that curse was inflicted, the claims of the law were met, so far that justice was satisfied, and the end of good government secured. Yet, as we have already seen, man, having sinned, had no power to avoid the curse by works of righteousness, even if he had been able and willing to keep the law in all future duration, for the reason that it required all that he could do, at any and all times. Nor could he, by suffering the penalty, make satisfaction to the law, so that he might, on that account, be

restored to *favor* with God, as *there is no merit in penal suffering*, or to the *image* of God, (even could his favor have been regained,) as there is nothing in *suffering*, *merely*, calculated to remove the corruption of our nature. Moreover, if the sufferings of the sinner could have *expiated* his guilt, redemption would have been needless. And, as man could not redeem himself, so neither could any other created being; because all creatures are required, by the law of their being, to do all they can do, on their own account; none having surplus time, or power, which he would be at liberty to employ on behalf of delinquent man, even should any possess sufficient benevolence to engage in the enterprise. But, suppose some creature had the disposition and the liberty to volunteer his services on man's behalf, what could he effect? 'To benefit man, he must take man's place—assume, and meet his responsibilities to the law; for, if God could have consistently granted deliverance to man, from the curse of the law, without a *full* and *perfect* satisfaction rendered by the *substitute*, he might have done it independently of *any satisfaction whatever*. As guilty man, then, was under the curse, his Redeemer must be "made a curse for us." When, however, he should have suffered the penalty of the law—death—he would have accomplished all that his limited powers could perform; and he, as dead and helpless as dead Adam, must remain, for any thing that he could do, for ever dead. All, therefore, that any created power could accomplish, had he the liberty to engage for man, would be a transfer of suffering from the guilty to the innocent, (if even the guilty should derive any benefit from his death,) who must impotently continue to "suffer, the just for the unjust," "long as eternal ages roll."

As the redemption under consideration contemplates man's deliverance "from the curse of the law," including the removal of all the consequences of sin, and as no created

being could accomplish this, it follows, that either we are unredeemed—hopelessly remaining under the curse, or that some being, owing allegiance to no superior, has redeemed us. But “Christ hath redeemed us;” therefore, *Christ is God*. It may be stated, as an axiom in divinity, that there are but two orders of beings in existence—the Creator and the created. The self-existent God is the one order; creatures of every grade, from the highest and purest of spiritual intelligences, down to mere inert matter, the other. To one of these orders Christ belongs. If, as some say, he is not God, he is a creature; and if a creature, dependent, and under a law which demands all he can do for himself; and, therefore, as he could do nothing for us, we are *unredeemed*. Is it objected to this view of the subject that “God cannot die; and, therefore, as Christ must die to redeem man from death, he could not be God?” We admit the premises, but deny the conclusion. The apparent difficulty in the case may be perfectly obviated, by considering that, though Christ is God—self-existent, independent, and eternal—yet *God, alone, is not Christ*. According to our second article, we believe that there are in the person of Christ two whole and perfect natures—the Godhead and the manhood. The truth of this sentiment will appear, when the office Christ filled, the relation he sustained, and the work he performed, are considered. Officially, he was the *Christ*—the *Anointed and sent* of God. Relatively, he was the Mediator between God and men; and his work was to effect a reconciliation between the parties, by redeeming man from guilt and sin—by rendering satisfaction to the just claims of the law on his behalf, and opening a way of pardon to such as afterward should sin. God, the Father, *sent* his Son, Christ, to be the Savior of the world. The Son, therefore, though God in nature, or essence—of the same power, glory, and eternity,

was a person distinct from the Father; otherwise, he could not be *sent*.

As the province of a mediator is to reconcile variant parties, he must, in order to succeed, possess the confidence, and understand the interests of both. If Christ, the Son, were God alone, possessing one nature only, man *would not* trust him; and if he were man alone, God *could not* trust him. Nor could he, as God, sympathize with man in his guilt and misery; or, as man, impartially appreciate the rights of God. A person who was neither God nor man, could know nothing, comparatively, of either. But a person in whom both these natures are united—and so united that they are both identical with that person, so that the act or passion of either nature shall be the act or passion of the person—we may clearly see, would be every way adequate to the important work. As God, in his mediatorial relation, he could understand, and urge upon man the claims of the divine government; and as man, in his mediatorial office, he could sympathize with man in all his sorrows. Having been tempted in all points like as we are, and having suffered, being tempted, he is able, also, to succor those who are tempted, as well as to appear in the presence of God for us. Thus, while, as God, he everywhere pleads the cause of God with men, as man, he pleads the cause of man with God. In him the two natures are united, and in him God and men may meet, be reconciled, and hold perpetual communion. This union, so necessary, was formed, virtually, when the divine Logos undertook the cause of fallen man. Till man fell, no mediator was necessary—sin had not then separated between man and God; but when this event did occur, then the mediatorial office was established, and the Mediator entered upon his work.

Thus we have the constituents of the Christ—the Media-

tor—the Son of God—the Son of man—the Redeemer and Savior of men. As God, he is eternal—as man, he had a beginning; and as Christ, Mediator, and Son, he had a beginning, if human nature belong to him, unless human nature is eternal; for whatever is true of the Christ, in this respect, is equally true of the Son. The attribution of the term Son, and the *unscriptural* phrase, “Eternal Son of God,” to the divine nature of Jesus Christ, is unfortunate; inasmuch as, while an arbitrary meaning is attached to the terms inconsistent with their etymology, no appreciable idea is presented to the mind; or, if any be understood, it involves a contradiction in terms—a palpable absurdity. As a Son, he was *begotten*; and God cannot *beget an eternal Son*.

It is equally improper to apply the term Son to the human nature of Christ alone: in fact, it belongs to neither exclusively; but the complex person formed by the union of both. This is a view of the subject, which, while it contradicts no Scripture, and *establishes, incontrovertibly*, all that for which the advocates of the eternity of the filial relation attach so much importance to the eternal Sonship, namely, the eternal power and Godhead of Christ, might harmonize the views of all Christians, without the sacrifice of any Scriptural sentiment, or form of expression.

This view is, also, substantially exhibited in our second article, where it is said, “The Word of the Father took man’s nature upon him in the womb of the virgin,” &c. Agreeably to this expression is the language of the angel to Mary: “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.” Also, that of St. Paul: “God sent forth his Son, *made of a woman*, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.” Hence, he is called, indifferently, Son of God, and Son of man; being

equally the Son of both—two whole and perfect natures being united in his person. In this way, we understand how “God was manifest in the flesh”—how “the Word was made flesh”—how “in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,” and the import of his interesting name—“Immanuel—God with us.” Thus, likewise, we see how he could, with the utmost propriety, say, “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was,” John xvii, 5; and, also, in John iii, 13, “And no man hath ascended up *to* heaven, but he that came down *from* heaven, even the *Son of man* which *is in* heaven.” In this last quotation, the phrase “Son of man” cannot apply to the human nature; for it did not *come down from* heaven; nor to the divine nature; because it existed before man did. It applies to Christ, however, compounded of both; for he came from heaven, was born of a woman, and was in heaven. What was true of either nature was true of the person.

It has been seen, that Christ must be God to enable him to engage in this work at all. It is equally plain that, as God alone, he could do nothing in it. He could not forgive the sinner without an atonement: that had been to legalize sin, or, which is the same thing, to nullify the law, and thus sacrifice the stability of his throne. Nor could he suffer the penalty of the law; because he could not sin: and that penalty was the immediate effect—the inevitable consequence of sin. What, then, was to be done? While guilty, helpless, hopeless, ruined man lay under the curse, exposed to the bitter pains of undying sorrow, and all creatures were impotent to save—while there was no eye to pity, or arm to bring relief, “we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death,” “that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man”—“who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to

be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;" "He took not on him the nature of *angels*;" for they were not the subjects of his redeeming acts; "but he took on him the seed of Abraham," because the "children" to be redeemed, "being flesh and blood, he himself, likewise, took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death. Wherefore, in all things, it behooved him to be *made like unto his brethren*; that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people;" that is, by his *death*.

It was proper that he should "take on him" *human* nature, rather than any other created nature, because in this way alone could the penalty be suffered, by the nature that sinned, in such a manner, that it would be meritorious to atone for sin, and deliver us from the *curse*. As, then, he must be God to engage in the work, so he must be man, that he might die; and he must be both in one person, that the act of either might be the act of the person.

But how did he redeem us? Answer: By suffering in his own person the penalty of the law, on our behalf. Thus "he suffered, the just for the unjust;" "was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and on him were laid the iniquities of us all;" "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree," and, "by the grace of God, tasted death for every man;" "He was made a curse for us."

But what was the nature and extent of his death? Answer: Precisely the same as that to which Adam, and in him the entire race of man, was exposed—spiritual death, with its concomitants—all that was due to Adam. Had he not endured this, how was the law satisfied? for it must be

remembered that the human nature only suffered. Is it objected, that, on this ground, we are left to depend upon a human sacrifice, and, consequently, a finite atonement—a limited satisfaction? Answer: The human nature in the person of Jesus Christ was perfect—"without sin," (otherwise he must have suffered on his own account,) and, therefore, unexceptionable, as to character; and, although he was "under the law," yet, having obeyed it fully, he was not subject to its penalty; but being identified with the divinity, in the person of Christ, he was at liberty to "offer himself, without spot, unto God," "for us." Again: this human nature was equal to the human nature of Adam, whether we regard him in his individual, or his representative character; and being equivalent, and being offered for us, I ask, what more is necessary, so far as suffering is concerned, to make a perfect atonement?

But he suffered a spiritual death. Being perfect, as man, he had a soul as well as a body. This "soul was sorrowful even unto death," and was made "an offering for sin." This death he suffered while hanging on the cross, which explains the deep meaning of that otherwise inexplicable exclamation of the atoning Lamb, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" As Adam did not, and, probably, could not die a temporal death till he, by sin, was separated from God, and was spiritually dead, so it seems reasonable that, until the dissolution of the two natures in the person of Christ, the human nature could not die temporally.

Is it said that Christ could not have suffered all the penalty, because it includes eternal death? I answer, eternal death is nothing, in its nature, different from spiritual death and its concomitants. It is merely the perpetuity of the state into which man was reduced by the execution of the penalty; and resulted necessarily from man's inability to extricate himself from it.

Christ having offered himself without spot unto God,

and suffered, in his human nature, all that human nature was under obligation to suffer, on account of Adam's sin, he, by his own power, "took up" his life again, and thus, by the energy of the divine nature in his person, burst the bands of death, "it being impossible that he should be holden of it;" "And having spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

Christ having thus paid our debt, and satisfied the claims of the law against us, so far as our obligation to suffer the penalty was concerned, acquired a property in us, and a right to govern us, and has now, as Mediator, all power in heaven and in earth *given* unto him to enable him to complete his mediatorial work—the restoration of man to the image and enjoyment of God, as well as his redemption "from the curse of the law." Redemption is completed: Christ hath redeemed us. The law has no claims upon us on account of Adam's transgression; for "as by the offense of one judgment came upon *all men* to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon *all men* unto justification of life." The foundation is thus laid, whereby *all may be saved*; indeed, *all are saved* thus far; and if we avail ourselves of that grace which is freely given to all for the renovation of our nature—if we do not resist the Holy Ghost, which Christ has sent, he will restore us to the image of God, and thus make us "meet for an inheritance among the saints in light."

Our salvation, though amply provided for, is still incomplete. As, in consequence of sin, we must all "return to the earth out of which we were taken," and "it is appointed unto men once to die;" and as a state of death is inconsistent with the perfection of our nature, and the happiness of man, Christ, in the further prosecution of his glorious work, will raise our bodies from death, and fashion them like unto his own glorious body, by "his mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself."

Finally, having redeemed us by his death, given us his laws, furnished us with the influences of his Spirit, the overtures of mercy to such as transgress his laws, with all the rich array of gracious means and influences—having pleaded our cause, and, by his intercession, stayed the execution of the vengeance of God upon us—having justified the believer, renewed and sanctified the faithful, and raised the dead, he will sit in judgment upon the human race, and award their doom: to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, have sought for glory, honor, and immortality, eternal life; but tribulation and anguish, indignation and wrath, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, and neglects this great salvation.

How great our obligations “to Him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood!”

“O, for this love, let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And, all harmonious, human tongues
Their Savior’s praises speak.”

How fearfully great, also, is our responsibility! By this redemption we are Christ’s; and if we do not rebel against his love, reject his counsels, grieve his Spirit, despise his authority, crucify him afresh, and put him to an open shame; or if, having done all these, we yield to his terms, repent of our sins, and believe with the heart unto righteousness—deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow him in the regeneration—live by faith upon him, and go on to perfection, we shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

THE WAY OF THE YOUNG.

SERMON XXXI.

BY REV. JOSEPH M. TRIMBLE.

THE WAY OF THE YOUNG.

“Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word,” Psa. cxix, 9.

LESSONS of experience, though oftentimes dearly purchased, are, generally, the most profitable. If, through this medium, we have learned the good or ill effects of any remedy recommended to alleviate our misery, memory retains the lesson thus taught with great tenacity. The Psalmist had, by bitter experience, learned that the way of the young is morally defiled. Oppressed by guilt, and burdened with a sense of his defilement, he sought, and, in the word of God, found the information necessary to enable him to cleanse his way. That we may profit by his experience, let us examine the text, from which we may learn,

I. THAT THE WAY OF THE YOUNG IS MORALLY DEFILED.

II. HOW THAT WAY MAY BE CLEANSED.

May the Spirit of God aid us so to present this subject to your hearts and minds, that it may prove the power of God to your salvation!

I. *The way of the young is morally defiled.*

The same, as a general remark, is true of all men. All are partakers of a nature ruined by sin, Romans v, 12. The first feature of this defilement which we shall notice, as belonging peculiarly to the young, is,

1. *Their ignorance of God.* “The world by wisdom knows not God.” Though he is to be seen in all his works, and is so intimately connected with man’s existence, that in him we live, move, and have our being, yet sin has so blinded the mind, that it observes not—it comprehends not these facts. This is true, to some extent, of minds

cultivated, but much more so of the uncultivated. The minds of youth are naturally disinclined to the acquisition of spiritual knowledge, yet grasp, with eagerness, those pursuits and employments which gratify the propensities of their unsanctified natures. It is a melancholy truth, that vast numbers of the youth of *our* country are destitute of moral instruction. Their parents, who ought to teach them, are themselves ignorant of God, and feel no interest for the moral education of their offspring. No marvel that, under these circumstances, many are to be found nearly as ignorant of God as those living in the midst of heathenism. When will the zeal of the Church gather these to places of moral training? But even the young, who are blessed with educational advantages, are but too partially instructed in the things that make for their peace. True, some Christian parents faithfully perform their duty to their children, and share the blessed fruits of their labor. But many, among professing parents, are sadly negligent in teaching their children to know and obey God; hence the fact, that so many of the children of parents belonging to the Church of Christ are found out of the pale of the Church, eagerly pressing on in the polluted way.

Too many believe, that rigid moral training is not best for their sons and daughters. They indulge them in their fondness for worldly amusements, virtually aiding them in their alienation from God, and the knowledge of his ways. No wonder that such children are ignorant of God. They seldom read the Bible; they prefer works of fiction—those slow but deadly poisons used by the adversary to ruin souls. These increase their desire for those places of fashionable resort and sinful amusement, with which our world is cursed. Thither they delight to repair, and, amid the associations there found, they learn to neglect God and religion. The want of interest manifested by the parent, will

strengthen and confirm the child in its disinclination to acquire a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and aid in producing,

2. *Unbelief, another feature of the polluted way.* Can it be matter of surprise, that those who are ignorant of God should be destitute of saving faith? How can they believe on him they know not? "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and sin defiles the heart of the sinner—even the young sinner. When unbelief sways the mind and heart, sin is committed with little or no concern for the consequences. Present gratification is sought in every way that promises success; and a failure to secure it in one way only strengthens the desire to try some other. With a courage worthy a good cause, unmindful of defeat, they hasten onward in quest of enjoyment. Nor does it require many years to make those who are ignorant and unbelieving, adepts in crime. Early—very early they evince a maturity in sin fearful to contemplate. Can we be at a loss for the causes which produce these sad results? The neglect of parental effort, and the powerful influence of example furnished by an ungodly world, stand among the first on the list. I confess, my heart sickens and grows sad, while I survey the multitudes of youth thronging the paths of worldly dissipation and folly, cheered on by the example and influence of irreligious men, some of whom are in high places. Vast numbers of these unbelieving youth are found to be descendants of professing Christians. The father prays, the son swears; the mother weeps, the daughter dances. Can each have faith in God? These unbelieving ones, as they embark on the sea of life, are like the vessel putting to sea without compass or chart, manned with raw recruits, destitute alike of knowledge and experience in the art of navigation. Ruin—certain ruin must await them; for their ignorance and unbelief leads to,

3. *Impenitency.* Hardness of heart is a great curse to

an old sinner: how much more dangerous to the young! Yet this is the inevitable result of ignorance and unbelief. If any doubt, let them examine into the history of the class of persons alluded to, and their doubts will soon vanish. How rapidly the heart, through the deceitfulness of sin, becomes morally insensible! I do not mean to say that such cannot weep—they have tears; but shed them only when deprived of some worldly pleasure, or when poring over some tale of fictitious sorrow—I mean they have no tears to shed over their own impiety. The moving, melting story of Calvary has no charms for them. They deem it evidence of weakness to weep amid scenes such as brought gushing tears from the Savior's eyes. Young persons of this class shun the society of the good and virtuous, and rarely mingle with God's people in the services of the sanctuary. The Sabbath is a day for congregating with spirits like themselves, to sport and sin its hours away. They prefer to "rejoice in their youth, and to let their hearts cheer them in the days of their youth—to walk in the ways of their heart, and in the sight of their eyes," hoping that for none of these things will God bring them into judgment. No tear of penitence—no godly sorrow for sin—no tenderness of soul enters into their experience. How many of them might truthfully sing,

"The rocks can rend, the earth can quake,
The sea can roar, the mountains shake;
Of feeling all things show some sign,
But this unfeeling heart of mine!"

The avenues of vice are thronged with these youthful impenitents, pressing eagerly after the pleasures of sin. What ear has not been pained with their profanity? What eye has not wept at beholding their irreligious, reckless course? And who can contemplate their end without exclaiming, "Lord, save, or they perish;" for where, in eternity, would

you expect to find these ignorant, unbelieving, and impenitent sons and daughters of folly but in outer darkness? where no music will fall on their ear but the groans of the damned—where there is nothing with which to sport but the flames that torment them—where no employment will be found for them but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Young man, are you unconverted? Open your eyes to behold your danger, contemplate the end—the dreadful end of the sinner, and resolve, in the strength of grace, to seek a shelter from the coming storm. Would you know,

II. *How the way of the young may be cleansed?*

Listen to David. As you imploringly inquire, “Where-with shall a young man cleanse his way?” he replies, “By taking heed thereto according to God’s word.” The Bible, resisting all the efforts of its foes, still stands a beacon-light to guide the erring youth into pure and peaceful paths. Most cheerfully we join the Psalmist in recommending it to all who are inquiring after truth; but especially would we urge the young to “search the Scriptures.” Aided by their instructions, you may,

1. *Exchange ignorance for true wisdom.* The youth, with the volume of inspiration as his text-book, may study to advantage the character and attributes of God, the character of his moral government, and his own relation to God as a subject of his government.

“Here light, descending from above,
Directs his doubtful feet.”

And, as he searches, his ignorance will vanish like mist before the rising sun; for “the commandments of the Lord are pure, enlightening the eyes,” and a knowledge of them is “more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold.” By careful and prayerful examination of the Scriptures, you will learn your true condition as a sinner, the way to Christ, the only Savior of guilty man, and the estimate God has put upon you. The Bible, and the Bible

only, teaches you, that God so loved you that he gave his only-begotten Son for you; that he who was the brightness of the Father's glory humbled himself, and took upon him your nature, and in that nature suffered and died for your sins, and rose for your justification. Can you dwell on truths such as these without becoming wiser and better? Let me assure you, the Bible deals in facts—facts awful and sublime. It tells you, you are a probationer on your trial for an eternal state, rapidly running your span of life. It tells of a day of judgment, and you must be there—of a Judge, and you must face him—of a canvassing of moral character, and yours must pass the solemn test. It tells of heaven, the final home of all the faithful and obedient servants of God, where they enjoy all that their nature, purified from sin, is capable of enjoying, and eternity alone measures the duration of their bliss. It tells of hell, and who are, and shall be there, revealing the deep and untold anguish of spirits damned. All this is done that you may be saved. Search, then, the sacred page, assured that you shall find the way of life; for “the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.”

By the light of divine truth you will be prepared to,

2. *Exchange unbelief for faith in Christ.* Faith comes by hearing—hearing by the word of God. ‘The truth of God is the foundation for faith. “Thy word is truth.” Christ is the object of faith.

“Faith, by its very nature, shall embrace both credence and obedience; Yea, the word for both is one, and cannot be divided.

For work void of faith, wherein can it be counted for a duty?

And faith not seen in work, whereby can the doctrine be discovered?

Faith in religion is an instrument—a handle, and the hand to turn it—

Less a condition than a mean, and more an operation than a virtue.

Ye are told of God's deep love—they that believe will love him;

They that love him will obey: and obedience hath its blessing.

Ye are taught of the soul's great price—they that believe will prize it,

And, prizing soul, will cherish well the hopes that make it happy.”

Faith in Jesus Christ is the link that unites the believer to his God. And, if you read the Scriptures with sincere desires to be instructed, you cannot fail to find food for faith; and the more eagerly you search, the more fully will you find your unbelief yielding to the claims of faith. So fully and so clearly is the plan of salvation presented in the Bible, that he who runs may read, and he who reads may understand and embrace. More than half the infidelity of the present day, exists by virtue of ignorance of God and his holy word. Rarely, if ever, does it occur, that the study of the Scriptures fails to produce in the mind of the student conviction of this truth: "They are of God."

What an interesting world of truth the Bible presents to the believing mind and heart! Truth, high as heaven—vast as immensity—to what shalt thou liken it?

"They be flashes of the day-spring from on high, shed from the windows of the skies;

They be streams of living waters, fresh from the fountain of Intelligence."

Let me urge you to approach this fountain: drink of its waters—its life-giving waters: drink, and your soul, dead in trespasses and in sins, shall show signs of returning life. Your moral sensibilities shall awake from guilty nature's sleep. Conscience will begin to plead for God, anxious to be disburdened of her load of guilt and sin.

Thus affected by the word of God, you will be prepared to,

3. *Exchange impenitency for godly sorrow for sin.* The word of God is the sword of the Spirit; and marvel not, if, while reading it, you should feel the sword penetrating your heart; for, like the rod of Moses, truth divine smites the flinty heart, and the waters of penitential sorrow gush out. Nor should I be surprised to hear you cry out, like Isaiah, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people

of unclean lips." Think it not strange, that, while you, by faith, look on Him who was wounded for your transgressions, your heart mourns. Genuine penitence makes the heart sick of sin. You will lothe it, and, by every possible means in your power, seek to be delivered from it; and, taking the Bible for your guide in this work, you will find upon its pages words of comfort and encouragement, such as these: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted;" "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest;" "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Believing and embracing these truths, you will experience the regenerating and purifying grace of God, and be made a new creature; while the Spirit of God witnesses with your spirit, that you are a child of his. Thus saved from sin, your way will be pure, while you permit God's word to direct your steps. Then hide the word of truth in your heart, that you sin not against God.

How great the change thus wrought in your experience, and in the sources of your pleasure! You will feel as though you occupied a place in a new world—every thing will be so changed. You will pine for no place of vain amusement—resort to no methods of modern or ancient impiety, to pass away a dull and tedious hour. But, with Jesus in your heart—the hope of glory formed, you will have, by experience, the pleasure of singing,

"Jesus, all the day long,
Is my joy and my song."

This is not imagination. Thousands have thus been enabled to rejoice in the possession of the love of God, shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost. Would to God I could induce you to imitate the wise and good of every

age, who have been servants of God, in daily reading and meditating upon the truths taught in the Gospel of Christ! If you would spend your life walking in pure paths—if you would have your probation end in sight of heaven—if you would be happy to all eternity, take the Bible to your heart: it will guide your steps aright. Let me exhort you to make it your companion: heed its pure and holy admonitions—embrace its exceeding great and precious promises—obey its holy commandments. Then, let earthly weal or woe betide you, happiness will dwell in your heart; and as you near the spirit-world, your enlightened mind and purified heart will have nothing to fear; but, with Paul, you may then exclaim, “To live, is Christ—to die, is gain.” May God, in great mercy, prepare us all to wind up life’s history in peace, and then exchange earth for heaven!

We infer from this subject,

1. That the number of young persons destitute of moral training, argues neglect somewhere. Is it upon the part of parents? What an awful account irreligious parents will have to meet at the bar of God—the souls of their children ruined through their neglect! Are Christians at fault? Is the Church of God neglecting the moral education of the young within her reach? O that God would awake the Church to effort, such as the worth of perishing souls demands!

2. If the path of the young is morally defiled, how much more impure is the path of that man, matured in years, and matured in habits of impiety! To what purpose have such been living? Treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath! What an awful treasure, and what a fearful amount upon deposit! To such there is no green spot in the history of the past upon which the mind can dwell with pleasure—no present, permanent enjoyment; and casting the eye forward, nothing seems to strike it that does not increase the fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, that

shall devour the adversary of God. To such we say, repent *now*: fly to your Bible—the long-neglected Bible: search—eagerly search to find a refuge from the impending danger; and stay not your efforts till, by the word of life, you are made wise unto salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ.

3. That all should be lovers of God's word—should take great delight in reading and meditating thereon; for

“Naught you can ask, to make you blest,
Is in this book denied.”

The Psalmist exclaimed, “O how love I thy law!” And how ardently he prayed, “Teach me thy statutes!” Imitate him in his attachment to the word of life. Let the Bible be your daily companion. If parents, let me impress it upon you as a duty never to be neglected, to teach your children its soul-stirring truths. Do it prayerfully and faithfully, that the Holy Spirit may impress it upon their hearts. Be more solicitous to see your offspring pious—fond of the means of grace and of the path of life, than to see them reveling, mirthfully, with the occupants of the way to death and sorrow. Be careful to lead them to God—not from him. Remember, to you is committed the work of training them for heaven or for hell. God grant that you may feel your responsibility; and, in view of all the interests of your children, for this world and the world to come, help you to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord! And may he hasten the day, when the Bible shall have its place and its influence in every mind and heart!

“Divine instructor—gracious Lord,
Be thou for ever near;
Teach me to love thy sacred word,
And view my Savior there.”

SERMON XXXII.

BY REV. SAMUEL LYNCH.

THE DESIRABLENESS OF DWELLING IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple," Psa. xxvii, 4.

The phrase, "house of the Lord," is a figure used to represent the Church of God. As a house is literally the habitation or dwelling of man, and as the body is called a house, being the habitation of the soul, so the Church is beautifully compared to a house, or body; for as the life and beauty of the body depend on its union with the soul, so the life and glory of the Church depend on its union with Christ; and as the body without the spirit dies, and becomes a putrid mass, so the Church, separate from the life-giving influence of the infinite and eternal Spirit, soon becomes a mass of moral putrefaction. This Church is composed of all who are united to Christ, their great Head, by faith—who, together, constitute the general, or catholic Church. But, like a vine or body, this Church is composed of different members, or branches; and our Lord has defined a branch of his Church thus: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," like the soul in the body, giving life and joy to all their exercises. We proceed to notice,

I. THE DESIRE OF DAVID.

This was, that he might "dwell in the house of the Lord," or the Church of the living God, "all the days of his life." This union with the Church was, by David, highly esteemed; for, said he, "I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." From this, we infer that it is our duty

and highest privilege to be united with the visible Church. It is our duty, because it is the path which the great Head of the Church has marked out for us; and, also, because we thus exert an influence on the Lord's side, and, by our example, lead others to become followers of Christ.

But one inquires, "Can I not serve God, and reach heaven, without joining the Church?" Suppose you could; then so can I, and so can all; and, then, what becomes of the Church? Would not this, therefore, be impeaching the wisdom of the Redeemer, who has set up and perpetuated his Church? Would it not be charging the only wise God with folly? But let us notice this a little further. "I can do without the Church." Can you? What would you know of God, of Christ, of judgment, of hell, of heaven, without the Church? You may say you could read your Bible, and attend the ministry of the word, and through these means learn your duty. But who has given you the Bible? Is not the Church the depository of God's word? and are not these ministers sent forth and supported by the Church? If it were not for the Church you would have no Bible, no Gospel minister, no day of rest.

There is much more implied in this prayer than a mere relation of membership to the Church. There is implied in it the enjoyment of the divine favor, and all the advantages connected with this favor. To explain: here is a circle within which the sun continually shines. While we keep within this circle we shall enjoy its light. So the Church, or house of the Lord, is this circle; and while we dwell here, walking continually in the fear of the Lord, and serving him daily, we shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life; hence, it is a high and glorious privilege to dwell in the house of the Lord. Happy are they who thus dwell in thy house! Here, to all such, the Lord God is a sun and shield, and the language of every sincere and pious heart is like that of Ruth, when she said

to her mother-in-law, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

And such was the one desire of David—that he might "dwell in the house of the Lord." How long? "All the days of my life." Our day of trial continues through and ends only with our mortal life. It will be of little avail, in death, that we *have* enjoyed the favor of God, if we are not *then* found in Christ. It is wise to secure the divine favor; but wiser still to hold fast to the end, as they, and they only, will, after death, be taken to the Church triumphant, who, at death, are found members of the spiritual Church militant.

We proceed to notice,

II. WHY DAVID DESIRED TO DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

1. "*That I may behold the beauty of the Lord.*" By the beauty of the Lord, we are not to understand that he desired to see the Lord in any tangible form, or bodily shape. We know there are those who represent the great I AM as having a body and parts, and thus literally humanize Jehovah, and make him like unto one of themselves. But he desired to see the beauty of the Lord in a more sublime sense. First, in his works in the material universe. We can see the beauty of the Lord in the wisdom and goodness manifested in this mundane system. But it may be inquired, does not the infidel see the same beauty? We grant that a philosopher may see beauty in the arrangement or fitness of things in the material universe; but he sees not the "beauty of the Lord." God is not in all his thoughts—he has put him out of his system. Not so with those who are born of God, and live in the enjoyment of his favor. They see the beauty of the Lord in all his works, and can look "through nature up to nature's God." The eyes of

their understanding being opened, they see God in every thing. They see his wisdom and goodness manifested in all his works, and can exclaim, with a delight known only to the child of God, "My Father made them all."

Again: it is while dwelling in the house of the Lord, that the beauty of the Lord may be seen, in the arrangements of divine providence. It is a doctrine full of comfort to the child of God, that the superintending care of God extends to every minutiae of his life—that the very hairs of his head are numbered—that God is his Father and his Friend. Confiding in his wisdom and goodness, he can, with patience, submit to all his providential dispensations—knowing that he is "too wise to err, and too good to be unkind." It is true, these dispensations may often be, to him, mysterious. God's ways may be past finding out—his path may be in the sea, and his footsteps in deep waters; but where he cannot know, he has learned to trust—having learned, not only from the assurances of God's word, but from past experience, that all things work together for good to them that love God. "No chastening," says the apostle, "for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness:" so that, from happy experience, we can say, God does nothing, nor suffers any thing to be done, but what we ourselves would do, if we could see through all events, as he does. True, the various steps by which he brings about his gracious purposes, may seem to us, at first, to be without any order or design. To a superficial observer, a piece of complicated machinery may be entirely inexplicable; while, to the experienced engineer, all is order and beauty. So, though

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain,"

the confiding Christian waits until God, in his own good time, shall make it plain. Dark and lowering may be the

cloud; but behind its frownings faith beholds the smiling face of Him who is a friend, and who doeth all things well, and exclaims, "It is the Lord: let him do whatsoever seemeth him good." Such has been the experience of God's people in all ages. Look at the afflictions of Job, and there see "the end of the Lord;" or at those of the patriarch Jacob, and see how he causeth the wrath of man to praise him, and delivers his people out of all their troubles. The venerable patriarch is well-nigh overwhelmed with his afflictions, and seems ready to yield to despondency: "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." But, in the final issue, he sees "the beauty of the Lord," as did Joseph, also, when he said to his guilty, but penitent brethren, "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good." And such has been the experience of many modern Christians. Who, that has read the narrative of "Patient Joe," has not been led to say, "Verily, there is a God, that judgeth in the earth!" Joe was a poor collier, whose trust was in the God of Jacob, whom he served. Working from home through the day, he was in the practice of taking with him, in the morning, his dinner, which was, one day, near dinner hour, carried off by a dog, that had entered the pit. Joe pursued the animal out of the mine some distance, till he found it was in vain to try to recover his meal. But when he returned what amazement! The pit, in his absence, had fallen, and those within had been hurried into eternity. Seeing in his escape "the beauty of the Lord," he exclaimed, "How could it appear to a short-sighted sinner, that my life should be saved by the loss of my dinner!" Thus do the interpositions of Providence appear to the pious. The mysterious visitations of his hand are so many links in the chain, by which we shall at last be brought safe to the land of rest.

But more clearly will this appear, when we gain the

upper sanctuary. Here we see through a glass, darkly; but there we shall see face to face. Here we know but in part; but there we shall know even as we are known. Yes, what we know not now, we shall know hereafter. Then shall we realize that our light afflictions, which were but for a moment, have worked out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and understand more perfectly why the Lord permitted us to be tried and tossed on the voyage of life. Then shall we, indeed, see the beauty of the Lord, and, with adoring wonder and gratitude, acknowledge that he hath done all things well.

“The beauty of the Lord” is, also, to be seen in the redemption of the world through Christ. Here are lengths and breadths, heights and depths of infinite love, which enrapture and captivate the pious heart. Here the beauty of the Lord appears most conspicuous. All his perfections unite in sweet harmony—“mercy and truth have met together—righteousness and peace have embraced each other.”

“Here the whole Deity is known;
Nor dares a creature guess
Which of the glories brightest shone,
The justice or the grace.”

Here we see the hatred of God against sin, and his love for the sinner. While the cross guards his holy and immutable law, it encourages the sinner to hope in his mercy. On this theme the child of God delights to dwell:

“Sweet the moments—rich in blessing,
Which thus before the cross he spends;
Life, and health, and peace possessing,
From the sinner’s dying friend.”

If the “beauty of the Lord” is thus seen in his house, is it not a most desirable place? Well might one of old exclaim, “How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river’s side, as the trees of lign-aloes

which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters."

2. Another reason why David desired to dwell in the house of the Lord was, that he might "inquire in his temple." It is here, in his holy temple, that God is to be sought; and here he will not be sought in vain. When beset with difficulties, so that our way may appear to be hedged up, we may ask of God, and he will direct us in the way. Let us ask, and we shall not be left in darkness. It is our duty and our interest to ask direction of the only wise God, in all the steps we take, and in all the plans and enterprises upon which we enter. Do we not esteem it a privilege, to have a wise earthly friend, to whom, on all important matters, we can repair and receive advice? Solomon says, that in the multitude of counselors there is safety; but who so able to give direction as the Ancient of days? and (what cause of encouragement!) none more willing. He giveth wisdom; and he giveth liberally, and upbraideth not. How happy are they who enjoy his instructions and guidance! Look at the benefit which David realized from access to God, when his thoughts troubled him, as he saw the prosperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of the righteous! He tells us that his feet had well-nigh slipped, until he went to the sanctuary, and inquired in the temple, when he saw their end. The Lord opened his eyes to see beyond this present life, and his mind resumed its former peace. If, in all the important affairs of life, we were to avail ourselves of this privilege, we should, no doubt, be more successful, and our days be more peaceful, prosperous, and happy. But let us remember we must be sincere, spiritual worshipers; for if we regard iniquity in our heart, the Lord will not hear us when we call.

III. DAVID'S PURPOSE TO SEEK WHAT HE SO MUCH DESIRED: "*One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after.*"

It is necessary, in order to success in any undertaking of importance, that we give it our undivided attention. How much more is this necessary, in order to secure the great blessing presented in the text! What is all earthly good in comparison to this? What is wealth, honor, learning, and pleasure, compared with the riches of grace, the wisdom from above, the honor that comes from God, and the pleasures that are at his right hand for evermore? On this object the mind of David was fixed. He regarded it as the "one thing needful"—"the pearl of great price." And this desire of God's favor was not a cold, formal feeling, which led to no effort—not like that of some, who tell us they desire to serve God, and secure a rest in heaven, but whose desire is not sufficiently strong to take them one step in the way toward heaven. Their desire is like that of the sluggard, who will not plough, by reason of the cold, and, therefore, begs in harvest, and has nothing. Not so the desire of heart which the Lord will satisfy. It is like the husbandman who patiently labors to obtain the fruits of his field: "That will I *seek* after." Yes, seek after it, as the merchantman seeketh goodly pearls, and as the panting hart seeks for the cooling stream—waiting upon God in the use of all the means of grace—in the public ordinances of his house, and in social and private prayer. "Evening, and morning, and at noon," said the Psalmist, "will I pray, and cry aloud," yea, "I will call upon him as long as I live." Thus let us seek, and we shall find. Look at the case of Jacob! All night he wrestled with the angel of the Lord—until the day began to dawn; and when the angel said, "Let me go; for the day breaketh," his language was, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Such efforts will not be in vain—they shall succeed. Then go and do likewise; and the Lord will grant you that which you so much desire—a place in his house, and with his people here on earth; and when you fail on earth—when

your relation to the Church below shall cease—your seat be vacant in the lower sanctuary, then, O then, “an entrance shall be administered unto you, abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,”

“Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
 Their Savior and brethren transported to greet—
 Where the anthems of glory unceasingly roll,
 And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul.”

SERMON XXXIII.

BY REV LEONARD B. GURLEY

CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY.

“Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace, also,” 2 Cor. viii, 7.

IF, after much thought and consideration, you had labored to erect a noble edifice, beautiful in its architectural proportions, costly in materials, and designed to endure for ages, what would be your feelings if, on inspection, a capital defect was apparent—one which, while it marred its beauty, would, also, endanger the safety and stability of the whole structure? How deep would be your mortification, and how heart-sickening your regret at an oversight so unexpected! But if the error were traceable to your own carelessness or indifference, regret would be deepened into remorse. But if, in the superstructure of piety which the Christian is endeavoring to erect, he should discover a similar error—if, after years of toil, he should find it defective in an important and essential particular—that it is not according to the pattern shown in the mount—and if this discovery should not be made until the moment which places it beyond all change and all remedy, how great,

then, would be his consternation, and how unmitigated his despair!

To prevent such a calamity, the apostle enforces on the Christian world, through this epistle to the Corinthian Church, a most important Christian grace, which may be denominated *Christian liberality*. He alludes to the bright constellation of Christian graces in which they already abounded, and then, to feed the flames of their enlightened zeal and glowing love, he adds, "See that ye abound in this grace, also." It is a grace which has its seat in the heart, is the fruit of faith, and an important characteristic of true Christianity—without which religion is but a name, and worship but solemn mockery. In the consideration of this grace, your attention is invited to,

I. ITS OBLIGATION.

'This rests on no doubtful foundation. God requires it. It is enjoined in the law and the prophets: "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruit of all thy increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty." Among the first lessons taught by the Savior was this: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth."

The sentiments of the Redeemer are further recorded by the apostle where he says, "That so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive"—words as profound in their philosophy as touching in their pathos. Ministers are required to "charge them that are rich in this world," "that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up for themselves a good foundation for time to come." But what if God did not require it? Would the Bible be more to our liking? Would it commend itself more effectually to every man's conscience in the sight of God, if, in the ample scope of its positive injunctions, it nowhere pleaded the cause of the poor and the needy? Would it be

more worthy of him who is styled "Father of mercies," if it passed over, unnoticed and uncared for, the wants of a sinful and suffering world? Would you love the Bible more if it urged benevolence less? Or rather, if revelation were utterly silent on this point, would you not have contended that it was so only because here revelation is useless; that here the light of reason alone is sufficient, and that the common sympathies of our nature revolt at that avarice and selfishness, which limits the benevolence of man to the pigmy orbit of his own self-interest, shutting out from his eyes and his heart the claims of a ruined world?

To sustain the dictates of reason, you would urge the great law of consanguinity, the common origin of our race—that we have one Father, one Redeemer, one sanctifier, and one heaven. You would contend, (the opinions of infidels to the contrary, notwithstanding,) that wherever man is found, he is found essentially the same, in his physical, mental, and moral constitution—that everywhere he thinks, reasons, remembers, and resolves—that his passions, propensities, and sympathies, are the same; and that, although variety is stamped upon our race, as on all that God has made, yet no different shade of color, or variety of configuration, or diversity of language, or degree of civilization, can rob a human being of his common brotherhood. Whether cradled amid polar snows, or Lybian sands—whether he dwell on the banks of the Danube or the Mississippi, the Ganges or the Nile—whether crowned with laurels, or cursed with manacles—still he can point to the glowing heraldry of his race: "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." And, finally, you would insist that he who would spurn these considerations, so as to feel no sympathy for his suffering fellow-creatures, should wear the mark of Cain, and, under the just maledictions of Heaven, wander a fugitive and vagabond on the face of the earth. But if

such strong conclusions could be drawn from reason alone, then, with what ten-fold force does the obligation press upon us, when, in every form of expression, and by every mode of appeal, it is enjoined in the sacred oracles, and when to direct injunction is superadded the influence of commended example, and the gracious assurance "that with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

II. ITS OBJECTS.

The objects of Christian liberality are numerous. He who has said, "Go work in my vineyard," has also said, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." Each successive age develops some new enterprise of benevolence—some new mode of attack on the empire of darkness, or some fresh channel by which the waters of life may be conveyed to a perishing world. The benevolent institutions of the day are the great moral levers which are destined, under God, and his truth, to break up the deep foundations of vice, and to shake the gates of hell to their centre. These associations are so constructed, that all can have the honor of contributing to their advancement, and, through their instrumentality, the wealth of Cræsus, or the widow's mite, can be usefully employed. The abundance of our land is such that few are reduced to absolute want; and the provision made for such, by public beneficence, happily relieves the Church of a great burden, and leaves her resources more abundant to meet those more extensive and permanent objects of philanthropy, which are at once the glory and the bulwarks of our Zion. The limits assigned to this discourse forbid the attempt, however pleasing, to dwell on these various associations, which so richly merit the high confidence and support of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ. We shall barely glance at some of them, and dwell at some length on one, which at present imperiously demands the attention of the Church. Bible, tract, and Sabbath school societies,

are great engines of power in the diffusion of light. Their influence, at home and abroad, is, to some good extent, obvious to all, and they are well worthy our cordial and constant patronage.

So, also, there is a strong claim for Christian liberality in the field of *missionary operations*. Vast empires, whose thronging millions have been in utter ignorance of the Gospel, are now inviting its approach. Their gates, long barred, have been, by a mysterious providence, unlocked and expanded, as if to invite the messengers of mercy from every land. China, Africa, and Mexico, must be regenerated. What golden harvests are here ripening for the sickle! And history shall record, in characters more durable than monuments of brass, what part of this great work shall be achieved by the American Churches. But on this glorious theme I may not dwell. I pass to the object of Christian liberality which has been selected as the special object of the present discourse.

The establishment of literary institutions, under Christian control, is, at the present time, an important feature in the benevolent enterprises of the Church.

Such institutions combine and exert, in a most efficient manner, the great elements of moral power. Their scope of action, and range of influence, is so extensive, complex, and enduring, that few perceive, at first sight, the thousandth part of their utility: like the pyramids of Egypt, whose massive structures, when seen in the distance, usually disappoint expectation, but, upon a nearer approach, and more careful observation, astonish the traveler with their gigantic proportions.

The importance of education, in whatever aspect we may view it, can scarcely be overrated. If "knowledge is power," then does the Church, by increasing her knowledge, increase her power. Education is to the mind what the wheel of the lapidary is to the rough diamond—it gives it a

polish, and develops its beauty and value. And if, in this great and growing state, there is a Christian Church, which may consistently disregard the high claims of science, the Methodist Episcopal Church certainly is not that denomination. She has more than one hundred thousand communicants, and three times that number connected with her congregations—a large proportion of whom are youth, whose character and usefulness will greatly depend on the facilities afforded them for classical and scientific instruction, in institutions under the control and watch-care of the Church of their own choice—youth who would never be encouraged by their parents to attend other institutions, where their religious principles might be subverted, or their morals impaired.

That the efforts of the Church, to promote collegiate education, may be more fully appreciated and sustained, we submit the following considerations:

1. *The college is the great disseminator of knowledge among the masses of community.* I know it may be urged that this honor should be awarded to the common school. This, indeed, may be readily conceded; but what would the common school be without the academy and the college? The college is to the public school what the sun is to the minor luminaries of our solar system. Extinguish the college, and the common school would emit but a sickly ray, and soon cease to shine altogether. The system of public schools, sustained by legal provision, may justly be regarded as a great blessing; but to give it that elevation and perfection which the honor and interests of the community require, we must multiply high schools for both sexes, until the whole west shall be so filled with well-educated youth, that competent instructors can be furnished to all our schools. Thus will our colleges be the great reservoirs on the eminence, supplying the springs below, whose refreshing water, gushing from ten thousand fountains, shall cheer

the hearts of the millions of our population, and spread their fertilizing influence all over the land. The benefits of a liberal education, however, are not confined to its possessors, but extend to community at large, and exert an important influence on the government, and laws, and destinies of a nation. We observe, therefore, in the next place,

2. Colleges, under *Christian control*, are the great *conservators of our republic*. There is, in all human governments, however modeled, a tendency to deterioration and decay. Some of the proudest nations of antiquity now live but in story and in song. Greece, Rome, and Egypt, with their moldering ruins, desolated cities, and degraded inhabitants, are mournful illustrations of the truth of this remark. And the same causes which produced their destruction, have not ceased to exist among mankind. Luxury, effeminacy, and vice led to the downfall of these mighty empires; and it must be confessed, that the accumulated wisdom of ages has devised no surer antidote to these evils, than intelligence and virtue.

In providing a safeguard against the evils to which we have adverted, it is not only important to have literary institutions, but institutions under *Christian control*, where the Bible shall be honored, religion encouraged, and high moral principle inculcated and enforced. If Christian Churches should surcease their efforts in this cause, infidelity would patronize and direct the education of our youth. This would, doubtless, be fatal both to the liberties of our republic and the interests of Zion. France tried the experiment. She had her universities—seats of high and varied learning; but they came under the influence of Atheistic infidelity. The poison which at first affected the higher classes, soon descended, and spread among the lower ranks of society. And now, when the sense of obligation to God was annihilated, and the light of conscience extinguished,

there were enacted deeds of unparalleled infamy and burning shame—deeds which made the ears of all who heard to tingle, and the blood to run cold in the veins. Then it was, that their national assembly voted the great God out of the universe, and caused to be inscribed, in glowing capitals, over the gates of their sepulchres, “Death an eternal sleep.” Then was the edge of the guillotine, from morning till night, glutted with human gore; and the soil of France drank into her bosom the best blood of thousands of her unoffending population. Terrible as were these calamities, which fell upon that people, similar ones would, doubtless, visit us, should infidelity sweep away those principles of integrity and virtue, which have hitherto been the strongest bulwarks of our nation. But, let the youth of our land find ready access to colleges, sustained by Christian liberality, and governed by Christian principle, where God’s word is daily read in their hearing, and the throne of grace invoked in their presence—let the same gifted minds who direct them in the paths of science, and who teach them to tread the heavens with a Newton step, lead their youthful minds, at the same time, to the bowers of life, and the streams of salvation—directing them, still, “from nature up to nature’s God”—then shall we have, going forth from our schools, an army of young men, not to league with infidelity against the Bible and religion, but to be the friends and defenders of both.

After the storm of the Revolution had passed away, our fathers lunched the ship of state on a tranquil sea; and hitherto, with few exceptions, we have sailed under cloudless skies. But storms are heard in the distance; and the wisest in Church and state tremble for the future. The two great sources of danger are, slavery and Popery. There are others; but these are the giant ones: so measureless in their magnitudes, and portentous in their consequences, that the stoutest heart quails at their contemplation.

The slave question is gathering strength and interest every day ; and no one can doubt that, within a few years, the storm will burst upon us—how, or in what way, Heaven only knows. But in whatever way it comes, our country will need all the intelligence, and integrity, and sound moral principle which she can give her sons. Amid the conflict of principle, the strife of party, and the clash of interests, the storm will gather amain, the tempest will rage, and the billows roll mountain high ; and then, if we have not clear heads and sound hearts to work the ship, and hold the helm, we shall *go down*. Our peaceful homes may be desolated—our crowded cities burned—our midnight slumbers may be broken by the clangor of the war-trump, and the clash of arms—our green fields strewed with slaughtered brothers, and all the horrors of civil war burst on our ill-fated heads. If we are not prepared to welcome such calamities as these, then let us guard against them, by those means placed within our reach by a beneficent Providence—educating the future legislators and controlling minds of our nation in the fear of the Lord.

Colleges, under Christian control, are essential, to *counteract the plans and influence of Roman Catholicism*. Popery is making colossal strides in this land of freedom ; and who that studies her genius, or has read her history, but must tremble for the consequences ? Every wind that blows from her ancient domains wafts thousands of her deluded and bigoted subjects to our shores. Our most profound politicians and experienced divines, see, in this astounding mass of foreign immigration, a fearful element of disturbance. The Roman Church professes to be, in her doctrines and decisions, infallible, and changeless ; while, in policy, she assumes a thousand Protean shapes, to suit the times, and delude mankind. The spirit of Popery, too, is changeless—its history is written, and written, too, in blood. Go, read it in the darkness of the middle ages ;

go, read it in the fires of Smithfield—the clanking chains, the gloomy dungeons, and the horrid tortures of the Inquisition. Until recently, she moved, in this country, stealthily as the wily Indian—with cautious eye and silent step; until, at length, the moment came, and she drew aside the curtain, and startled our nation with her thunder-tones. She tried the experiment of her political power on the great state of New York. She bade it vote the Bible of God from every public school in the Emporium City; and there was no power to resist her mandate—it was done. Already she counts her votaries by millions. Her churches, convents, colleges, and schools of charity, have risen up as if by magic, all over the land—not erected by domestic contributions, but, chiefly, with foreign gold, collected for this very purpose from the rich vassals and deluded poor. Our religion she denounces as heresy—our revivals as fanaticism; and the sacred word of God, which we revere, she commits to the flames. And if, already, she can so trample on the feelings of Protestants as to burn their Bibles, what will she not burn, if she gains the power? We know what she has burned; and her principles are changeless.

While the power of Rome, and her boasted glory, are waning in monarchical governments, she is elated to see them rising and flourishing on republican soil. And it is most evident, that this Union is the spot where she hopes to restore her lost grandeur—to erect anew her crumbling throne, and once more rule the nations with a rod of iron. And if wealth, cunning, power, political intrigue, and indomitable perseverance can win the day for Popery, it will be done. All her plans and movements look to the future. Her churches, instead of agreeing with the paucity and poverty of her people, are, in many instances, vast and durable structures—built for future times, when, perhaps, cardinals and bishops shall give laws to this realm. Here, then, the last great battle with Anti-christ is to be fought. Already

are the elements gathering. The chosen ground of the enemy is the *field of science*. Here she nails the cross, and unfolds her ensigns, and marshals her hosts. From this ground she must be driven, or we are lost. The great problem to be solved is this: will Protestant Christians hold their ground, and educate their own youth, or will they, with an indifference as fatal as treason, consign them to the training of Jesuit priests? Woe to this nation, when the spirit of Popery shall preside in her councils of state, and her temples of science. But toward this point she is now making rapid strides; and the day that crowns her efforts, will be the day that shall consign our liberties, both civil and religious, to a deep, dark, and hopeless grave.

It has been objected to colleges, that they benefit the rich, and not the poor; but the reverse of this is the truth. If there were no colleges west of the Alleghany mountains, still the rich could send their sons to Harvard, or Yale, or even to Europe. But then there would exist an odious aristocracy of wealth, learning, and power. The sons of the rich would monopolize all the honors that learning and science confer. They would fill all those places of distinction and profit which require well-disciplined and educated minds; while the sons of our farmers and mechanics of moderate income, endowed by nature with equal or superior intellects, would be doomed to hopeless ignorance and obscurity. It is a fact, that a large proportion of the students of our western institutions, are young men of very limited means, and many of them wholly dependent on their own exertions. Thus the college in our midst encourages the poor, but gifted youth, and opens to him, as well as to others, the highway to distinction and usefulness. Thus it is clearly seen, that he who is the friend of the college, is emphatically the friend of the poor. If the preceding observations be correct, it will follow, that the present efforts of the Church to promote general education and classical

literature, are alike honorable to herself and beneficial to the nation.

Moreover, the blessing of God on our colleges and high-schools has been so richly given, that it may be justly regarded as the broad seal of divine approbation—rewarding us in our labors, and encouraging us onward in this work, until science and religion, mingling their brilliant hues, like the bow of promise, shall bend their broad arches to span the moral world, giving to man the delightful assurance that the waters of infidelity and superstition shall no more deluge the earth.

III. THE MOTIVES WHICH SHOULD INFLUENCE US TO CULTIVATE THIS GRACE.

And, first, let us reflect on the great sin of covetousness. “Take heed, and beware of covetousness,” is the solemn admonition of Christ. When the shipwrecked apostle kindled a fire for his comfort, a viper came forth from the sticks, and fastened on his hand; so, while gathering the materials for our temporal comfort, does covetousness, like the “venomous beast,” coil its serpent folds around us; and, unless we beware, it will plant its envenomed fangs deep in our bosom. From the beginning of the world has the love of filthy lucre been the cause of wretchedness to man. It brought the plagues on Egypt, and sunk Pharoah and his hosts, like lead, in the mighty waters. It dug a gloomy grave for Achan and his family. It murdered Naboth for his vineyard, and gave the blood of Ahab to the hungry dogs. Covetousness gave to Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, as an inheritance for his doomed family for ever, the horrid leprosy of Naaman, the Syrian. Connected with pride, its usual companion, it built the gallows for the righteous Mordecai, and hung Absalom by the locks of his head. It turned the proud Nebuchadnezzar into a maniac—to dwell with the beasts of the field, and to eat grass as oxen, until seven times had passed over him. It brought the

vessels of God's house to add splendor to the bacchanalian feast of Belshazzar, who met his fate according to the handwriting on the wall. It sold the Son of God for twenty pieces of silver, and sent Judas, smitten with remorse, "to his own place;" and, soon after, put Ananias and his guilty consort, in one sad day, into a grave of infamy. It has no ear for the widow's wail, or the orphan's cry. Neither the tears of suffering virtue, nor the moans of pining want, nor the honor of the Christian name, nor souls bought by a Redeemer's blood, can move its heart of iron.

Few, indeed, are willing to admit that they have alliance with this great sin; but "by their fruits ye shall know them." "If ye have not the spirit of Christ, ye are none of his;" and he who has not the spirit of benevolence must be covetous. If he can "see his brother have need, and shut up his bowels of compassion"—if he does not feel that it is "more blessed to give than to receive"—if he is rich in this world, and not "rich in good works—ready to distribute—willing to communicate;" then, without controversy, he is a covetous man—the plague-spot is on him, whether visible to himself or not; and, as God is true, he must repent or perish.

Professed lover of Christ, what have *you* done for God? Zaccheus said, to an approving Savior, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor." What portion do you give for all objects of benevolence? Alas! how many of the rich, in the day of judgment, will be awfully disappointed! Many of them, with thousands in their possession, have never, in a whole life, given what might be called a liberal offering. But the day of reckoning is at hand. Their fearful doom is but too painfully intimated by the apostle James: "Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire."

Has God blessed you with competence or wealth? Then lift up your eyes on the whitening fields, and thrust in your sickle. In addition to the ordinary claims of the Church, what a favorable opportunity do our rising literary institutions present, to enroll your name on the list of those who have been the noblest benefactors of mankind! In addition to what may be given from time to time, how many might make bequests, or secure, by will, a certain part of their estate, to endow professorships, or otherwise to aid our high-schools and colleges! If you have children, or other relatives, to inherit your property, let the cause of God come in for a share with them; and what they might receive from you, would be doubly beneficial, when connected with so noble an example.

In conclusion, let me suppose, beloved hearer, that you have given yourself to the Lord, and that you feel that you are not your own, but bought with a price. Blessed with grace, you have aimed to respond, cheerfully, to the many everyday calls upon your bounty. The ministers of the Church at home have been fed at your table, and missionaries in foreign climes have shared in your kind regards. And now, with the journey of life well-nigh finished, perhaps, and your long-sought rest, by faith, in view, you still love our Zion; and, with a full heart, can say,

“For her my tears shall fall;
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given,
Till toils and cares shall end.”

And now, in view of that period, when you shall retrospect, for the last time, on earth, the path you have traveled, do you not think it would sweeten the remembrances of that hour, to look back on, at least, some one act of more than ordinary liberality—some judicious and well-timed contribution, which shall stand out in bold relief amid the everyday apportionments of your bounty, as the sun in the

heavens? The moment of such a blessed deed, would, in review, glow as the brightest page in your earthly history—a green spot on the checkered pathway of life; and although you rest no hope of heaven on the merit of works, yet the reflection that you had aimed to be not only a faithful, but *grateful* laborer in your Master's cause, would sweeten even the chalice of death. And, while such an act of love would bless mankind, and embalm your name in the hearts of the pious, no doubt it would place you nearer to the throne, and wreath your brow with a more glorious diadem; “For as one star differeth from another in glory, so shall it be in the resurrection of the dead.” “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”

SERMON XXXIV

(A SKETCH.)

BY THE LATE REV. RUSSEL BIGELOW

CAUTION TO BELIEVERS.

“Let us, therefore, fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it,” Heb. iv, 1.

I SHALL consider,

I. THE REST SPOKEN OF IN THE TEXT.

1. A rest from the labors necessary to procure sustenance.
2. From the labor necessary to enjoy the means of grace.
3. A rest from bodily afflictions.
4. A rest from losses and disappointments.
5. A rest from persecutions and temptations.
6. This rest implies refreshment.
 1. The fruits of paradise.
 2. The water of life.
 3. The garments of salvation.
 4. Palms and crowns.
 5. Society of saints and angels.
 6. Union with God.

7. This rest eternal.

II. THE PROMISE SPOKEN OF.

1. The characters to whom the promise is given. 1. All men, on condition of repentance. 2. All believers, if they continue faithful to the end.

2. The Promiser—the Lord, even Jehovah. 1. What he promises he is able to perform. 2. He is willing to perform. 3. He is a God of truth—he cannot lie.

III. THE NECESSITY OF THIS FEAR.

1. As the promise to all men is on condition of truly seeking the good, there is necessity of fear.

2. As the promise to believers is on condition of continuing in the faith, there is need of possessing fear.

3. Our ignorance, weakness, depravity, and the danger which surrounds us, afford causes of fear.

IV THE NATURE OF THIS FEAR.

1. A fear of jealousy—be jealous over ourselves.

2. A fear of caution—be afraid of sin.

3. A filial fear before God.

APPLICATION.

1. How abundant the goodness of God in providing rest!

2. How glorious that rest, and how happy those who enter into it!

3. How awful the situation of those who fall short!

SERMON XXXV

BY REV JACOB YOUNG.

CHRIST'S LEGACY TO HIS DISCIPLES.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," John xiv, 27.

THESE words were originally spoken to a small company of men who had, literally, left all the world to follow a

Master, who had nowhere to lay his head, and who now informs them that he is about to leave them. This announcement filled their hearts with sorrow. Might they not naturally have remonstrated in the following language: "Master, thou knowest we have left all for thy sake, and are now counted the filth and offscouring of the world, in consequence of our attachment to thee. We are surrounded by enemies on every side; and wilt thou leave us like lambs in the midst of wolves? While enjoying thy society and instruction, we have been more than remunerated for all sacrifices made for thy sake; but, if now left by thee, where shall we look for comfort and direction?" The words of the text were designed, by our Lord, to still their fears, and tranquilize their minds; and were well calculated to accomplish the end he had in view. We regard the text as the last will and testament of our Lord; and in this will he bequeathes a divine legacy, which is of more value than all the riches and honor of this world. He had no lands, goods, or chattels to leave them—neither gold or silver; but he had that which was infinitely better. This legacy was not only left to the apostles, but to all the followers of the blessed Savior in every age and clime. This legacy is *peace*—peace of no ordinary character. It is "the peace of God that passeth all understanding." In the elucidation of this subject, we shall pursue the following order:

I. THE NATURE OF THIS LEGACY.

II. THE MANNER IN WHICH IT IS GIVEN.

III. THE CONFIDENCE AND COURAGE IT OUGHT TO INSPIRE.

I. *The nature of this legacy.* "Peace I leave with you, *my peace* I give unto you."

Peace is the proper element of the human soul: without it there is no happiness. But who can so well appreciate the blessing of peace as the man who has been involved in

all the horrors of war! In secular wars there are, generally, many alleviating circumstances. If a man's lot is cast in a country involved in war, he may retire from the seaboard, or frontier, to the interior, and sit down under his own roof, and enjoy ease and quietness. Or should he ever live in a country convulsed with all the horrors of civil war, he might expatriate himself, and go to some other part of the world, where the public mind was more tranquil. But there is a war that admits of no alleviation, and in which the whole human family is involved. Man, by nature, is at war with his God: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;" "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." Man is not only an enemy to God, but has incurred his displeasure by his wicked works. God is represented as being angry with the wicked every day; and while man is thus placed antagonistic to his Maker, he has no place to fly for relief. He is a miserable being, and may say, as Milton represents Satan saying of himself:

"Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;
And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still, threat'ning to devour me, opens wide."

He carries the seat of war in his own breast. He looks toward heaven—God seems to frown upon him. He looks toward the law—the Ten Commandments are as ten great guns ready to thunder destruction on his guilty soul. This is the condition of all the children of Adam; but they know it not; nor can they ever rightly appreciate the blessing contained in the legacy, until, by the Spirit and truth of God, they are made to see themselves in their true character. When a sinner is awakened by divine grace, he may adopt the language of Saul of Tarsus, and say, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment

came, sin revived, and I died." Under these discoveries there is nothing so desirable as reconciliation with God; he, therefore, prizes the peace bequeathed by Christ to his disciples above all price. He counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. When, like the first disciples, he becomes willing to forsake all and follow the Savior, Christ receives him; and, by an act of grace, he is made an heir of God, and, by faith, receives this divine bequest. God is reconciled to him by the death and intercession of his Son; and, through the influence of the Holy Ghost, the carnal mind is removed, and he is reconciled to God. He has a divine assurance that God loves him, and he loves God. The Spirit of God bears witness with his spirit that he is born of God: "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." This is the peace spoken of in the text. It is the same peace he has with his Father, and which he communicates to his followers. It is like a river deep and wide, which bears away all obstructions; and as a large river glides smoothly on until it is lost in the ocean, so this peace carries the Christian on until he is lost in the boundless ocean of the love of God.

There is not only a direct peace with God, but with the law of God. While a sinner, he was at war with the law of God, and the law condemned him. But now he can say, with the Psalmist, "O, how love I thy law!" it is "more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter than the honey and the honey-comb." "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law does he meditate day and night." A Christian is not only reconciled to the law of God, delighting continually in its purity and spirituality, but he is reconciled to the providence of God. He sees and acknowledges that God is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his acts—that God's

government of the natural, as well as of the moral world, is wise, just, and good.

Out of this peace with God and his law rises great peace in his own soul. He has peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 'This inward peace gives him great meekness and quietness, which, in the sight of God, are of great price. He follows peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

II. *The manner in which this legacy is given.* "Not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

In order to understand how he gives this legacy, we must understand how the world gives. Here, by a common figure of speech, called metonymy, the men who rule the world are called "the world." And how do these men give, or bestow their favors? 1. As a general thing, they give grudgingly and sparingly. The expectations of their favorites are not realized. As a proof of this, you will discover that those on whom their favors are bestowed are rarely ever happy—always craving more. But Christ gives bountifully—far more than those who receive his bounties expected. There is, on all occasions, a complete and an entire satisfaction on the part of the receivers, and they are constrained to say, with the Queen of Sheba, "The half was not told me."

2. The world gives *partially*. It has a few favorites on whom it bestows its favors, and a large majority are left to languish in the shade. But Christ gives impartially. When he died on the cross, he purchased eternal life for the whole human family, and offers this precious boon to all mankind, through the Gospel. In his generous offers he makes no distinction. He offers eternal life to the king and the beggar on the same conditions. Persons in every condition in life, of every language, and of every clime, are invited to come and take the waters of life freely. He overlooks

none—he neglects none. That watchful eye which guards the falling sparrow, beholds all the children of men for their good. He not only manifests a willingness to bless, but expresses an anxiety that all should come and receive of his grace and live.

3. The world is *fickle-minded*, wavering, and inconstant, often changing its favorites. This will appear in the administration of all human governments, from the beginning up till the present day. But Christ is unchangeable in his character, and unchangeable in his administration. He never casts off, nor forsakes his followers, unless they forsake him. If they hear his voice, and follow him, he will give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hands. The Christian has the strongest ground of confidence that he will be sustained, under all circumstances, during life, and that he will not be forsaken in the trying hour of death; and that, finally, he will be brought to Mount Zion, where God has commanded the blessing—even life for evermore.

4. The world is wont to give most in times of prosperity, when her favorites are young, healthy, and popular. Then, if the world is ever lavish of her gifts, she will bestow them liberally. But Christ, on the contrary, is ever wont to bestow his favors in times of deep adversity. When the Christian has grown old, infirm, and poor, he experiences the peculiar care and kindness of the great Redeemer. His kind hand wipes his flowing tears—his Holy Spirit soothes his sorrows. Though he may, for a time, lie at some rich man's gate, covered with sores, desiring to be fed with crumbs, he will not lie there long. By the command of the Savior, he will soon be conveyed to Abraham's bosom, to rest for ever in glory.

III. *The confidence and courage which this promise should inspire.*

1. We inquire, why should the hearts of Christians be

troubled? for they have the assurance of the direction and protection of Jesus Christ. He has given unto his Church many exceeding great and precious promises; and by these promises he has bound himself to sustain them in life, and to crown them in heaven. Now, let it be recollected, that all power in heaven and earth is given unto Christ; and that he reigns over both the natural and moral world; and that all things are under the controlling power of his mighty hand. In the days of his incarnation, he had power over the winds, and the waves—over devils, and all manner of diseases, and even over death itself. His wisdom and goodness are equal to his power; therefore, nothing can befall his Church without his permission. Though he was dead, he is alive for evermore, and has the keys of hell and death. He can open, and no man can shut. He never will suffer his followers to be tempted above that which they are able to bear, but with the temptation will make a way for their escape, that they may be able to bear it. From these considerations, it appears very clear that Christians have no reason to be troubled in this world. There are two important points, in which they are deeply interested, that stand out prominently in the Bible. 1. That they will be sustained, and well sustained under every trial that can befall them during life. This position is sustained by the history of all past ages. There is no account given in the Bible, or any other history, of a good man being forsaken of his God. We might here give you cases illustrative of this fact, so numerous that it would weary your patience; but we forbear, and will only say that we readily admit that good men, for short periods, have often been involved in persecutions and afflictions of various kinds, but they have always triumphed gloriously in the end. 2. That all things shall work together for their good, and their light afflictions, which are but for a moment, will work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Now with all these

facts presented to your view in the Holy Bible, why should a man be troubled or dismayed? Life is short, and will soon terminate, and be followed by an eternal life of glory. Therefore, I say, stay yourselves upon your God, calm the troubled elements of your souls, possess yourselves in patience, and wait all the days of your appointed time, till your change shall come.

2. Let not your heart be afraid. Why should a man fear where there is no cause of fear? I am well aware, however, that the fearful and unbelieving cannot hope for the mercy of God; but they who trust in the Lord, are like Mount Zion and the hills round about Jerusalem, that cannot be moved. I am aware that some think and say that Christians have much to fear in this wicked world. We learn from the Bible that all wicked men are enemies to God; and consequently they are enemies to his Church, and will do her all the injury they possibly can, as did, for instance, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, Herod the Great, Antiochus, Julius Cæsar, and thousands of others, who might be named, if it were necessary. This description of men have been very numerous in every age of the world, and in every country where the Church has flourished. Many of them have possessed great power and influence; and, according to sound theology, these men act under Satanic influence. The Church has not only to contend with men, but with principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places.

It would appear now, to the superficial observer, from the picture we have drawn, that the Church has much cause to fear. But there is another view to be taken of this matter. Let it be recollected, that fallen angels, and fallen men, are limited in their operations; and, to use a figure, they can go no further than the length of their chain. God, who watches over the concerns of his own Church, will never suffer either men or devils to do her any

essential injury. As the enemies are all chained and held by the omnipotent hand of the Son of God, there is nothing to fear from any thing they can do. For all the temporary wounds they can inflict upon the Church, she shall be abundantly remunerated in the world to come.

Again: has not the Christian cause to fear death? for certainly death is a fearful thing, and is very properly called the *king* of terrors. We think it not strange that irreligious men fear death. Death deprives them of life, of friends, and all they enjoy in this world, and they have no hope of a better world to come. But the case is quite different with the Christian. Death to him is changed into a messenger of peace. In the article of death, all his temporary afflictions come to an everlasting close. Death to him is the gate to endless joy. Through this gate he passes to the kingdom of heaven, to enjoy that peace which the great Redeemer has prepared for him. Nor has he any thing to fear from the judgment to come; for Christ will be the judge—he who is his best friend.

In conclusion, let me say to you all, make sure work for the day of eternity. Ascertain to a certainty that you are the legatees of our Lord Jesus Christ, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ to a crown, and to a kingdom that shall never wax old, nor fade away. Having settled this point between Christ and your own souls, lay aside all your troubles, and dismiss all your fears—possess your souls in patience, and serve God in the beauty of holiness. So shall you be sustained in life, pass safely through the valley and shadow of death, and be crowned with eternal glory in the world to come—which may God grant to be your happy lot, for Christ's sake! Amen.

THE END.

